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ABSTRACT

This third volume in a series of seven is part of a larger study of parental involvement in four federal programs in selected school districts across the country. Presented here are the results of an intensive examination of projects funded by the Emergency School Aid Act (ESAA). Site studies of ESAA projects yielded data on the five ways parents could participate in the programs--through governance, instruction, parent education, school support, and community-school relations. The researchers found that all 12 sites in the sample had established district-wide advisory committees, but that these committees were not decision-making bodies. Their lack of participation in policy making was largely attributed to the project directors' failure to encourage parent leadership. Few sites involved parents in the instructional process--as paraprofessionals, volunteers, or as tutors at home. However, the data did indicate that parental participation in instruction could bring changes in teachers' instructional approaches, improve student performance, and increase parents' interest in their children's educational experiences. Few consequences of parental involvement were reported in school support, parent education, or community-school relations activities. Where evident, parental participation appeared to encourage student interest in school and to enhance the opportunity for parents to be hired as paid aides. For each area of involvement studied, policies and activities are suggested for improving parent participation. (Author/WD)

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Parents and Federal Education Programs

Volume 3: ESAA

EA 014 813

The Study of Parental Involvement

PARENTS AND FEDERAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

VOLUME 3: ESAA

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PREFACE

Under the sponsorship of the U.S. Department of Education, System Development Corporation is conducting a multi-stage study of parental involvement in four federally funded programs: Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, the Emergency School Aid Act, Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, and Follow Through.

Parents may participate in several program functions--project governance, instruction of students, non-instructional support services, and school-community relations. In addition, projects sponsored by these programs may provide educational services for the parents themselves. The Study of Parental Involvement has been designed to obtain detailed descriptions of the nature and extent of activities involving parents, to identify factors that facilitate or inhibit the conduct of such activities, and to determine the direction and degree of the outcomes of these parental involvement activities. The objective of the study is to provide a description of parental involvement practices in each of the programs, highlighting those that succeed in fostering and supporting parental involvement activities.

An earlier report, "Parents and Federal Education Programs: Preliminary Findings from the Study of Parental Involvement," described the findings from a survey of nationally representative samples of districts and schools participating in these programs. It provides program-wide estimates of the extent of parental involvement with respect to certain formal characteristics of the functions mentioned above.

The present volume is one of seven which present the results of the next phase of the study. In this phase, a smaller number of selected sites was studied intensively to provide more detailed information on the causes and consequences of parental involvement activities. The volumes in this series are described below.

Volume 1 is a comparison of parental involvement activities across the four programs, contrasting the contributory factors and outcomes. Policy issues, such as the effect of parental involvement on the quality of education, the influence of regulations and guidelines, etc., are discussed from a multi-program perspective in this volume.

Volume 2 is a detailed summary of the findings from each of the subsequent volumes.

Volumes 3 to 6 describe and discuss in detail the findings for each of the four programs. Volume 3 is devoted to the ESAA program; Volume 4 is for the Title 7 program; Volume 5 is for the Follow Through program; and Volume 6 is for the Title I program.

Volume 7, the last volume in the series, describes in detail the technical aspects of the study--the data collection methodologies for each phase, the instruments developed for the study, and the methods of data analysis employed. In addition, this volume provides a description of the data base that will become part of the public domain at the completion of the study.

The last product to be developed from the study will be a model handbook that will provide information for local project staff and interested parents about the practices that were effective in obtaining parental involvement in these Federal programs.

OVERVIEW AND SUMMARY

This report contains findings from the Study of Parental Involvement in Four Federal Education Programs pertaining to the Emergency School Aid Act (ESAA). The Study of Parental Involvement has been carried out by System Development Corporation (SDC) under a contract with the U.S. Department of Education (ED).

The ESAA program provides financial assistance to local educational agencies, state educational agencies, and nonprofit organizations to conduct projects designed to help schools with problems associated with desegregation. The Study of Parental Involvement was designed to accomplish five major goals with regard to ESAA:

1. Describe parental involvement
2. Identify factors that facilitate or inhibit parental involvement
3. Determine the consequences of parental involvement
4. Specify successful parental involvement practices
5. Promulgate findings

This report is one in a series that promulgates the findings of the study. It covers the first three goals in considerable detail. An earlier report (Parents and Federal Education Programs: Some Preliminary Findings from the Study of Parental Involvement) treated the first goal and part of the second in terms of data acquired from a nationally-representative sample of districts and schools. The present report deals with in-depth information acquired from a purposeful sample of projects. Another report in the series (Involving Parents: A Handbook for Participation in Schools) contains information on the successful parental involvement practices that were uncovered during the study.

Data reported here were collected during the spring of 1980 at 12 school districts in the nation conducting ESAA projects. The data were acquired by trained Field Researchers who lived in the communities and who spent four months seeking answers to research questions concerning parental involvement.

Data were obtained by Field Researchers through interviews, observations of events, and analyses of project documents, and were reported to the senior study staff. The latter, in turn, carried out analyses of data to detect patterns across projects.

During the time the data were being collected ESAA projects were operating under regulations issued in 1976 to implement 1974 amended legislation. (In 1978 the legislation had again been amended, but new regulations had not been issued at the time projects were being studied.) The findings reported here are not to be construed as an audit of compliance with regulations, since there were very few specific statements in the legislation or regulations by which to assess the implementation of parental involvement components in projects. Further, the contract between SDC and ED called for a descriptive study rather than an evaluation of parental involvement.

SDC defined parental involvement in terms of five ways in which parents can participate in ESAA projects. They are:

1. Governance--The participation of parents in the process of decision making for a project, particularly through advisory groups.

2. Instruction--The participation of parents in a project's instructional program as paid aides, instructional volunteers, and tutors of their own children.

3. Parent Education--Educational offerings by a project, intended to improve parents' skills and knowledge.

4. School Support--Project activities through which parents can provide non-instructional support to a school or a project.

5. Community-School Relations--Activities sponsored by a project to improve communications and interpersonal relations among parents and staff members.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN PROJECT GOVERNANCE

During the Site Study we looked for instances of parents being involved in giving advice or making suggestions to ESAA staff and/or the LEA--advice which was listened to and led to action on some occasions. Participation in decisions about both the planning and implementation of the project were examined. Mandated District-wide Advisory Committees (DACs) were the identified mechanisms by which parents tended to play a governance role in the projects. Concerning DACs, we found that:

- All 12 of the Site Study sites had established DACs which were operating at the time of the Study.

- On the whole, DACs at the sites were doing very little. None could be regarded as a real decision-/policy-making body. Few even participated in generating serious advice for ESAA staff, let alone making decisions.

- Although overall none of the Site Study DACs qualified as a decision-making group, four DACs did levy advice and suggestions that were listened to by project staff and led to occasional changes. They seem to have been, in other words, genuine participants in the decision-making process, although not decision makers.

In examining the factors that tended to facilitate or inhibit parental involvement in governance, we tried to answer two questions that the above descriptive findings raised: (1) Why, overall, were the DACs in the Site Study playing such a negligible role in project/district governance? (2) Why were DACs at four sites relatively more active in the governance realm than the others? The primary answer suggested by the data to Question #1 was:

o DACs were not more involved in decision-making activities because Project Directors were not pushing for such a role. Our analyses suggested that Project Directors were by far the most influential actors in DAC operations; they also held positions of prominence in project operations and the district at large. In other words, Project Directors had the means and status to establish real participatory roles in decision making for DACs. They did not, on the whole, do so because: (1) they were not encouraged by the regulations; (2) they were constrained by the district administrative contexts within which their projects operated; and (3) they subscribed to the notion, held by both parents and educators, that education should be the province of educators.

On the other hand, the DACs at four sites were relatively more active because:

- The Project Directors at these sites were actively supportive of DACs' becoming involved in project decision making. They carried out specific measures to encourage and enhance parental leadership within the DAC; and they set up mechanisms by which DAC involvement in project decisions was facilitated and supported.

- These sites had instituted intense training efforts for DAC members which included explanations of how and why ESAA is funded and descriptions of the ways in which the project was intended to work.

In general, the study found that few outcomes were systematically associated with parental particpation on DACs at the 12 sites. Impacts on the behavior and attitudes of persons touched by parental involvement in DACs--including the parent participants themselves--were limited to parents at six sites reporting that service on the DAC had made them more knowledgeable about the workings of the school system and better able to deal with the system. Patterns of impacts on educational processes and institutional arrangements were also sought. At those sites where DACs were encouraged to make serious recommendations, there was evidence that some aspects of project design had been affected in the last few years. At one site, the influence of the DAC was being manifested in the broader sphere of district-wide desegregation planning.

Our analysis of parental involvement in the ESAA governance process led us to conclude that if genuine parental participation in project governance is desired by the ESAA Federal program office or local practitioners, a number of policies could be adopted. At the Federal level:

- The Federal legislation and regulations could clearly and straightforwardly state the intended nature of parental participation in the process of project governance.
  - Terms like "advise" and "consult with" could be defined to clarify operationally to what they refer and do not refer.
  - Areas within which parents can and cannot participate in project governance could be identified.
  - The timing of DAC input into decisions and the expected impact of that input could be specified.
  - Procedures by which local projects can demonstrate that parental participation in the process of project governance has indeed taken place could be described.

At the local level, LEAs could institute the following practices:

- The specification, in both the proposal and in a public statement, of a role for the DAC in project governance, including the substantive areas with which the DAC will be concerned;
- The establishment of regular means by which the DAC and its members will communicate with the larger community/school environment, thereby improving the group's visibility with its presumed constituency;
- The offering of training to members for the purpose of developing leadership talents, group interaction/problem solving techniques, and

the technical skills necessary to perform such difficult tasks as reviewing a Federal proposal or critiquing educational services; and

- The delegation of direct responsibility to a person whose job will be to facilitate/coordinate DAC participation in the process of governance.

Finally, in the realm of governance, one conclusion emerged from our work that was not reflected in the aforementioned set of policy suggestions. We believe, based on our data, that a concerted attempt to upgrade the governance activities of parents could benefit greatly from some sort of network for communication across ESAA programs on a nationwide basis. This network would help to cross-fertilize ideas and/or successful strategies.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN INSTRUCTION

The Site Study examined the extent to which parents were involved in the ESAA instructional process at the 12 sites. Instances of parents operating in actual teaching or tutorial capacities were sought as well as parents performing instructional support tasks, such as clerical and record-keeping tasks. Three avenues for potential participation were investigated--as paid paraprofessionals (paid aides), as instructional volunteers, and as teachers of their own children at home (home tutors).

Concerning parents as paid paraprofessionals, we found that:

- Five of the 12 ESAA sites studied had parents acting as aides.

- Despite regulations that call for assurances that parents should be given preference in the recruitment and hiring of teacher aides, the data indicated that few conscious attempts were made by LEAs to hire parents. Nonetheless, many parents were recruited because district procedures typically gave school principals a major hand in recruitment and hiring.

- No distinctions were made between parent and non-parent aides in terms of their duties, training, or evaluations.

- In general, paid aides had little or no input into decisions regarding the design or implementation of the paid paraprofessional component, nor into decisions involving classroom methods and materials. At two sites aides were given definite decision-making opportunities with respect to classroom activities. At these sites, decision-making opportunities seemed to be related to the provision of training workshops.

The second potential avenue for parental involvement in the instructional process was through volunteerism. We discovered that:

- None of the 12 sites had an ESAA-sponsored volunteer component in operation. Therefore, neither parents nor non-parents were found functioning in that role.

ESAA parents serving as teachers of their own children at home turned out to be nearly as rare at these 12 sites as ESAA-supported instructional volunteerism.

- One site of those sampled placed emphasis on utilizing parents as teachers of their own children.

Several factors were identified as having contributed to shaping parental involvement in the ESAA instructional process. According to our data, few sites had parents operating in the role of paid paraprofessionals because:

- The available pool of potential parent applicants had been dramatically reduced. Two reasons for this reduction surfaced. First, the rise in inflation had forced many parents to return to full-time jobs. Second, parents of bused students living a distance from school had difficulty in participating in any ESAA-sponsored activities or in even cultivating a sense of ownership and responsibility for the school. Further, few sites made conscious, formal attempts to hire parents as aides. Yet parents were hired at nearly half the sites because:

- Principals were key actors in the recruitment and hiring of paid aides. They were inclined to hire people whose work they knew well. Often, such people came from the school volunteer ranks and were parents.

  Moreover, the fact that paid aides had little involvement in decision making at the project and classroom level seemed to be related to three factors.

  1) The school structure was under the tight control of the district, with little opportunity for influence from outside the administration.

  2) Many professional staff were skeptical about the level of education of parent aides and their subsequent ability to provide significant recommendations to the component.

  3) At most sites, potential aide participation in decision-making was limited by the lack of formal communication between aides and professional staff members, and among aides themselves. Aides, in other words, tended to be isolated.

On the positive side, those sites where classroom aides were given major instructional tasks and some responsibility for classroom decision making were characterized by teachers/ESAA staff that believed in the potentially valuable contributions of parents and yet recognized that parents cannot necessarily be expected to have adequate amounts of experience in actually teaching youngsters. Therefore, they provided a good deal of pre- and in-service training activities. In addition, the professional staff set up many opportunities for parent aides to communicate formally and informally among themselves, with teachers, and with other professional staff.

With respect to parent volunteerism, we found that a variety of circumstances existed which served to limit the need for projects to design formal ESAA volunteer programs. The most prevalent circumstances included:

- Lack of any regulatory requirements
- Having long-established, non-ESAA volunteer programs already operating on-site which included participation by ESAA and non-ESAA parents
- A general cutback in volunteer programs because of the economy, which had forced many parents back to work
- The decision on the part of districts not to have a volunteer program because they preferred hiring paraprofessionals to do the work instead

In trying to account for the lack of home tutoring in ESAA projects, we found that most projects had not even considered this as a mechanism for parental involvement. For those that had entertained home tutoring possibilities, serious district and ESAA budget cutbacks was the reason given most often as to why home tutoring programs were not developed.

Because so few sites had parents involved in the instructional process, we had difficulty in identifying actual patterns of outcomes that cut across sites. However, the data did contain examples of consequences of parental involvement as paid paraprofessionals--examples that seemed to substantiate the potential importance of parental participation in this functional area. In the educational-institutional realm, identified positive outcomes included: (1) changes in instructional approaches prompted by aides' insights and suggestions; (2) improvements in student performance; and (3) increased general parental interest concerning student performance and teaching methods, prompted by aides serving as a link with the parental community.

The individual/personal outcomes that were most commonly reported by parent aides as deriving from their involvement in the instructional process included: (1) considerable gains in self-confidence; (2) an increased ability to understand the school personnel, administration, and overall structure; (3) a high degree of satisfaction from seeing a child make educational gains; (4) feelings that they could more effectively help and understand their own children; and (5) pleasure from simply gaining more knowledge themselves.

Our conclusions about what might be done to enhance parental involvement in the instructional process were confined to parents acting as aides because we did not have a basis in our data for suggesting changes in the other two areas. At the Federal level, we concluded that:

- Federal legislation and regulations could spell out the intended nature of parental participation as paid aides.
  - A more prominent statement could be made that parents are expected to participate in local projects as aides, in those cases where ESAA aides are employed. Examples of the ways in which parents could profitably be utilized could also be provided.
  - A statement might be made specifying the expected magnitude of district efforts to give priority to parents for aide positions; further, the regulations could require that details of a district's projected efforts to recruit/hire parents be presented in the proposal.

At the local level, we suggested that:

- Local Education Agencies (LEAs) could actively establish policies and procedures that will ensure that parents of students currently receiving ESAA services are given preference in filling paid aide positions.

- LEAs or local projects could institute the following practices intended to permit paid parent aides, once hired, to play a more meaningful role in the instructional process:
  - Intensive pre- and in-service training might be offered to paid aides for the purposes of imparting the substantive skills necessary to assist in the instructional process. Whenever possible, teaching professionals might be part of these training sessions, so that working relationships begin to form.
  - Regular means might be established by which parent aides can communicate, both formally and informally, with one another, with teaching professionals, and with other staff--including the principal.
  - Overall supervisory responsibility for all ESAA aides might be delegated to one individual who can coordinate the component's operations across all served schools.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN PARENT EDUCATION, SCHOOL SUPPORT AND COMMUNITY-SCHOOL RELATIONS

Information collected on these three functional areas during the Site Study was less detailed than in governance or instruction because of the fact that there was no mention of them in the program regulations. In addition, these three areas are not directly related to potential impacts on the quality of educational services provided to ESAA students. Consequently, within the volume we treat parent education, school-support, and community-school relations in a single chapter called "Other Forms of Parental Involvement."

Overall, we found that:

- Four sites had ESAA-sponsored parent education activities, while six sites had school support activities. The latter were largely not on-going and programmatic in nature.

- The majority of the study sites provided a variety of opportunities for improving community-school relations. Most relied on a combination of home-school outreach services, Parent Coordinator liaison activities, and one-way written communication efforts.

- Only one of the 12 study sites had activities in all three of the subject components.

- In all of the six study sites that claimed to have no ESAA-sponsored school support activities, successful non-ESAA sponsored support functions were already in operation.

- Parents generally played no role in determining the function or content of any of the activities offered within the realms of parent education, school support, or community-school relations.

We also examined for these three functional areas the factors that tended to facilitate or inhibit parental involvement. In essence we tried to answer three questions.

1. Why was there little meaningful activity in the areas of ESAA-sponsored parent education and school support? Not surprisingly, our data suggested that the most important reason for this revolved around the lack of any mandate in the regulations for activity in either domain. Further, in the case of school support, the six sites without ESAA-sponsored school support activities already had active non-ESAA school support programs in operation--programs that were stimulating the involvement of ESAA parents as well as others.

2. Why then do the majority of study sites provide a variety of opportunities for improving community-school relations, even though this area was not mandated either? This is probably attributable to the fact that establishing lines of communication with the served population is a natural outgrowth of having any Federal program in

operation. In other words, any district-level director of a Federal program is compelled, at the very least, to disseminate information about services available through a program (what we have termed one-way communication). Thus, some amount of effort in the direction of improving community-school relations might be expected to be a structural feature of most ESAA projects.

3. Why did parents generally play no role in determining the content of activities offered within the three subject areas? The ESAA staff tended to both coordinate and make decisions about what activities would be offered within the three realms, thereby excluding the participation of parents in decision making. Attitudes held by both staff and parents seem to account for this state of affairs. At some sites it was reported that ESAA staff (and some school administrators) simply did not value parental input into the formulation of project offerings enough to set up mechanisms to elicit such input. Evidence from other sites suggested that parents in urban areas particularly tend to participate in school/communities when the issues are "hot" or of primary interest to the majority of the community. Parent education or school support issues did not generate such interest at the Site Study sites.

Few consequences of parental involvement in the school support, parent education, or community-school relations domains were reported and none was replicated across sites. At individual sites, we saw: (1) student interest and performance being spurred by the participation of parents in school support; (2) the likelihood of parents being hired as paid aides by principals being increased through participation in school support; and (3) increased information exchange and the probability of an increase in parental participation being caused by serious efforts at community-school relations.

Our analysis of parental involvement in parent education, school support, and community-school relations led us to two conclusions. First, since the three functional areas covered in this section appeared to have been operationally distinct from each other at the Study sites, we concluded that a more comprehensive approach would have enhanced the participation by parents in three areas. While none of the areas could be termed overwhelmingly successful in terms of parent participation, perhaps by utilizing their collective resources in a coordinated effort sites could have better realized heightened parental interest.

Second, we suggested, wherever possible, the employment of an ESAA Parent Coordinator at sites interested in increasing parent participation. There is evidence that the presence of Parent Coordinators served to initiate activity at a number of sites, especially in the areas of school support and community-school relations. Part of the problem for the majority of sites was that they had no individual to organize or coordinate parent activities, let alone recruit or encourage parents to attend them.

ADDITIONAL POLICY ISSUES AND SUGGESTIONS

In addition to investigating policy-relevant issues in the areas of governance and instruction, we also examined issues related to: (1) funding considerations (e.g., total funding levels, allocations to parental involvement) and impacts on parental involvement; (2) multiple Federal programs at a site and impacts on parental involvement; and (3) the effects of parental involvement on the overall quality of educational services.

Funding considerations. In light of the difficulty we had in collecting reliable, comparable funding data, and in recognition of similar difficulty experienced by other researchers studying Federal programs, we concluded that the ESAA program office might consider:

- Defining precisely what is and what is not to be treated as parental involvement in an operational project.

- Developing and implementing a standardized reporting form for parental involvement expenses.

Multiple Federal programs. Because we found so little interaction or coordination among parental involvement components of different programs, we were not able to make suggestions in this area. For example, having examined only one instance of a single advisory group serving more than one project, we do not have grounds for suggesting that this practice be followed or specifically avoided.

Educational quality. A thorough review of our overall findings led us to conclude that, in order to develop arrangements by which parents can influence educational quality in ESAA projects, three steps might be taken by policy makers:

- A more meaningful role could be specified, by the national ESAA office and by LEAs for parents in the decision-making process for local projects.
    - Advisory committees could be given active roles in planning, implementing, and evaluating project services.
    - Parents assisting in the instructional process could be given active roles in planning project instructional services.
- Local ESAA projects might design on-going activities whereby parents can augment project services through active support efforts.
- Local ESAA projects could take steps to assess the effectiveness of their attempts at improving relations between the ESAA project schools and served parents. Such an assessment, made on the basis of observable improvements in school climate and parental support of the school, could lead to useful refinements in the methods employed.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

The Study of Parental Involvement in Federal Educational Programs was designed to provide a systematic exploration of parental participation in four programs sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education. The Study consists of two substudies: the Federal Programs Survey and the Site Study. A previous document reported the findings from the Federal Programs Survey, while this volume is devoted to that portion of the Site Study relating to the ESAA program.

This chapter gives the reader a brief orientation to the Site Study. Elaborations on the themes addressed herein are provided in the Appendix.

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

In the last two decades parental participation has come to play an increasingly important and different role in education. The concept of parental involvement in Federal educational programs had its roots in the Community Action Program of the 1964 Economics Opportunity Act (EOA). One intent of the EOA was to promote community action to increase the political participation of previously excluded citizens, particularly members of ethnic minority groups, and to provide them with a role in the formation of policies and decisions that affect their lives. Specifically, the EOA required that poverty programs be developed with the "maximum feasible participation of the residents of areas and the members of the groups served."

This maximum feasible participation requirement has had broad interpretation in education. Head Start, the first EOA education program to attempt intensive parental participation, requires local projects to include parents on policy-making councils. Head Start parents also can become involved as paid staff members in Head Start centers, and as teachers of their own children at home.

Other Federal educational programs have tended to follow the Head Start lead in identifying both decision-making and direct service roles for parents. Participation by parents in Federal programs was stipulated in the General Education Provisions Act, which calls for regulations encouraging parental participation in any programs for which it is determined that such participation would increase program effectiveness.

The Study of Parental Involvement was designed to examine parental involvement components of four Federal programs: ESEA Title I, ESEA Title VII Bilingual, Emergency School Aid Act (ESAA), and Follow Through. All derive their emphasis on parental and community participation from the General Education Provisions Act, but there are differences in legislation, regulations, and guidelines among the four programs. These differences--in intent, target population, and parental involvement requirements--make the programs a particularly rich source for insights into the nature and extent of parental participation in Federal educational programs.

The present study takes on added significance in light of the paucity of prior research into the nature of parental involvement. Despite increasing programmatic emphasis on parental participation, little systematic information is available on the activities in which parents engage, the reasons such activities take place, and the results of the activities.

PURPOSES FOR THE STUDY

Given the lack of information on parental involvement in Federal education programs, the Education Department in 1978 issued a Request for Proposal for a study to achieve two broad goals: (1) obtain accurate descriptions of the form and extent of parental involvement and, for each form or participation role, identify factors that seem to facilitate or prevent parents from carrying out the role; and (2) investigate the feasibility of disseminating information about effective parental involvement.

In response, System Development Corporation (SDC) proposed a study with these major objectives:

1. Describe Parental Involvement: provide detailed descriptions of the types and levels of parental involvement activities, characteristics of participants and non-participants, and costs.

2. Identify Contributory Factors: identify factors that facilitate or inhibit parental involvement activities.

3. Determine Consequences: determine the direction and degree of outcomes of parental involvement activities.

4. Specify Successful Strategies: document those practices that have been effective in enhancing parental involvement.

5. Promulgate Findings: produce reports and handbooks on parental involvement for project personnel, program administrators, and Congress.

OVERALL STUDY DESIGN

To meet the objectives outlined above, SDC designed the work as a series of substudies. First, the Federal Programs Survey was developed to collect quantitative data on formal parental involvement activities from a sample of districts representative of each program on a nationwide basis. Second, the Site Study was created to explore in an in-depth fashion the contributory factors and consequences of parental involvement, as well as the more informal activities.

The Federal Programs Survey had two broad purposes. The first was to provide nationwide projections of the nature and extent of formal parental involvement activities. (See Parents and Federal Education Programs: Some Preliminary Findings from the Study of Parental Involvement.) The second was to provide information needed to establish meaningful, purposive samples for the Site Study. On the other hand, the Site Study was planned to allow for detailed investigations of projects that had particular characteristics as determined in the survey, notably projects that appeared to have greater and lesser degrees of parental participation.

During the planning period of the Study a conceptual framework for parental involvement was developed, along with the specification of a series of policy-relevant issues. The conceptualization, depicted on the following page, can be summarized in this statement:

> Given that certain preconditions are satisfied, parental involvement functions are implemented in varying ways, depending upon particular contextual factors, and they produce certain outcomes.

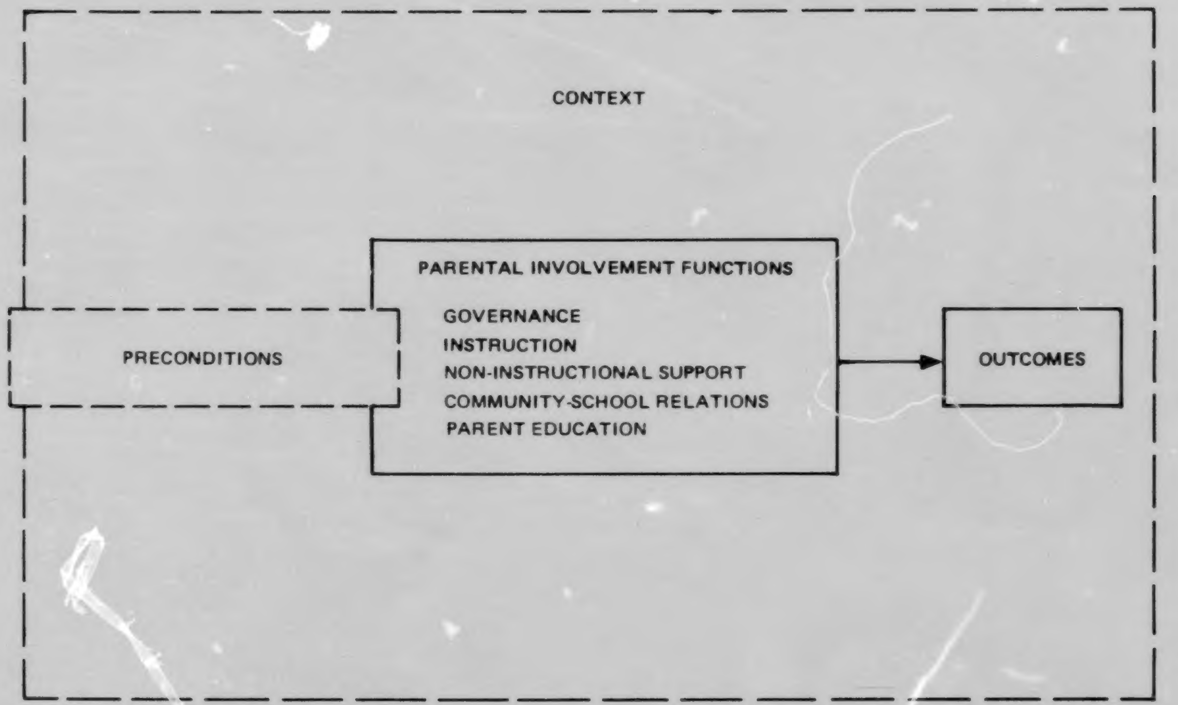
CONTEXT
PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT FUNCTIONS
GOVERNANCE
INSTRUCTION
NON-INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT
COMMUNITY-SCHOOL RELATIONS
PARENT EDUCATION
PRECONDITIONS
OUTCOMES

Figure 1-1. Diagram Representing the Conceptual Framework for the Study of Parental Involvement

These five functions form the definition of parental involvement used in the Study:

- parental participation in project governance,
- parental participation in project instructional services,
- parental participation in non-instructional (school) support services,
- communication and interpersonal relations among parents and educators, and
- educational offerings for parents.

Policy-relevant issues were specified in five areas on the basis of interviews with Congressional staff members, Federal program officials, project personnel, and parents. They are presented in the figure that follows.

SITE STUDY METHODOLOGY

Since this volume contains the results of the Site Study, a brief description of the methodology for that substudy is presented here. The time period involved is the 1979-80 school year; actual data collection took place from January through May 1980.

Samples for the Site Study were drawn independently for each program, with a goal of selecting projects that reported greater and lesser degrees of parental involvement for the Federal Programs Survey. Districts were selected first, then two schools within each district. At the close of data collection the total sample was 57 sites, constituted as follows: Title I=16, Follow Through=16, Title VII=13, and ESAA=12.

The purposes for the Site Study demanded an intensive, on-site data collection effort employing a variety of data sources and substantial time. This was met by hiring and training experienced researchers who lived in the vicinity of each site. They collected data on a half-time basis for a period of at least 16 weeks.

1. Parental Involvement in Governance
    - Do existing Federal and state legislation, regulations, and guidelines allow parents to participate in making important decisions?
    - Do existing state and local practices affect parental participation in the making of important decisions?

2. Parental Involvement in the Instructional Process
    - Do existing Federal and state legislation, regulations, and guidelines allow parents to participate meaningfully in instructional roles?
    - Do existing state and local practices affect meaningful parental participation in instructional roles?

3. Funding Considerations and Parental Involvement
    - Do total funding levels affect the quantity and quality of parental involvement activities?
    - Do the timing and duration of fund allocations influence the quantity and quality of parental involvement activities?
    - Does the amount of funding specifically devoted to parental involvement affect the quantity and quality of parental involvement activities?

4. Parental Involvement and Educational Quality
    - Do parental involvement activities influence the quality of education provided to students served by the four Federal programs?

5. Multiple Funding and Parental Involvement
    - When multiple programs are funded at a site, are the quantity and quality of parental involvement activities affected?

Figure 1-2. Policy-Relevant Issues for the Study of Parental Involvement

Three techniques were used by Field Researchers: interviews, observations, and document analyses. Their efforts were guided by analysis packets that contained details on research questions to answer and techniques to employ. Each Field Researcher worked closely with an SDC Site Coordinator, who provided guidance and assistance. Information was submitted to SDC on a regular basis by means of tape-recorded protocols and written forms. Toward the end of their work, Field Researchers prepared summary protocols in which they analyzed all data for their own site; these summary protocols became the first step in the analysis process.

Following the receipt of summary protocols, senior SDC staff summarized the findings from each site into syntheses that followed a common outline. The syntheses were further distilled into analysis tables that displayed data in matrices, which were examined for cross-site patterns. Versions of analysis tables appear in subsequent chapters, along with the major findings regarding the research questions guiding the study.

INTRODUCTION TO THE VOLUME

The remainder of this report is organized as follows. First is a treatment of the Federal program, then a description of the sample, followed by a chapter on the coordination of parental involvement. Chapters thereafter take up the five functional areas in turn. The final chapter addresses the policy-relevant issues.

Chapters dealing with the five functional areas are structured around the basic study objectives. That is, they contain findings on parental involvement activities for a functional area, along with the contributory factors and consequences for the activities. Throughout those chapters, findings are presented in two ways: total information is displayed in tables, while major findings are highlighted in the text.

Recognizing the need for maintaining the confidentiality of participants in the study, pseudonyms have been used to identify districts and schools. In addition, the common titles of Project Director and Parent Coordinator are used, although projects actually called those persons by many other names.

CHAPTER 2

THE ESAA PROGRAM

The second largest of the four Federal education programs included in this study is the ESAA program. Section 602(b) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act describes the purpose of the program:

> ...to provide financial assistance (1) to meet the special needs incident to the elimination of minority group segregation and discrimination among students and faculty in elementary and secondary schools; and (2) to encourage the voluntary elimination, reduction, or prevention of minority group isolation in elementary and secondary schools with substantial proportions of minority group students.

In implementing this legislation, the U.S. Department of Education awards grants to LEAs, State Educational Agencies (SEAs), and nonprofit organizations to conduct projects designed to help schools with problems associated with desegregation.

ESAA is a non-categorical education program. Its target population is composed of students in districts that are implementing or are planning to implement a desegregation plan. As noted in the above quote from the legislation, its goals are to reduce racial group isolation, to treat problems arising from desegregation, and to overcome the educational disadvantagement of racial isolation. Projects are carried out at the district level, at the school level, or through non-profit organizations.

Within ESAA, the legislation requires an LEA-level advisory committee. This committee is to participate in the development of an LEA's application for a grant; thereafter, if a grant is awarded, the committee is to consult periodically with the LEA about the administration and operation of the project. Project funds may be used to employ parents as paraprofessionals, and such parents may participate in various project activities, not limited to serving as instructional aides. ESAA schools sometimes form school-level advisory groups, and there are instances of LEAs and/or ESAA schools assigning a staff member and/or employing a parent to function as a liaison between the school and parents. In addition, nonprofit organizations receiving ESAA funds typically involve parents in project activities, through a variety of roles.

The conceptualization developed for the Study of Parental Involvement contains five functional areas--avenues through which parents can participate in Federal education programs. These five functions are described below, as they apply to ESAA projects.

Governance Function. This function refers to parental participation in the decision-making process. Parents can participate in the governance of ESAA projects in the following way:

1. as members of the mandated District-wide Advisory Committee;
2. as members of a school-level ESAA advisory committee; and
3. informally, as individuals or as members of other advisory groups/organizations.

Education Function. This function refers to parental participation in the instructional process. Parents can participate in the educational component of ESAA projects as paid aides, volunteers, and as teachers of their own children in the home. Paid aides and volunteers are used in ESAA projects in a variety of ways including: to help individual students and groups of students to master academic skills; to prepare materials for academic instruction; and to assist in the development and/or presentation of human relations units or workshops. Parents also teach their own children at home to help them acquire academic skills.

School Support Function. This function refers to parental augmentation of the school's resources. Parents can augment an ESAA school's resources by volunteering to act as speakers in classrooms and at assemblies, demonstrating particular skills to students, improving buildings and grounds, locating or making non-instructional materials, and raising funds. As either volunteers or paid aides, parents supervise students on the playground and during field trips. Parents assist the professional staff in dealing with such matters as the closure of a school, the reassignment of key personnel, and the passage of school finance issues. Parents provide encouragement to their own children.

Community-School Relations Function. This function refers to parent-school exchanges of information and the development of improved interpersonal relations. Parents in an ESAA school can take part in this function as participants in communication by way of written and telephonic messages, informational meetings and face-to-face dialogues, and through formal and social interchanges involving the school staff and parents.

Parent Education Function. This function refers to the training provided to parents to assist them in areas where there are student needs. Parents in ESAA schools can receive training through workshops offered by local projects. Parent education programs include such topics as child growth and development, parent-child relations, health and nutrition, and leadership development.

CHAPTER 3
ORGANIZATION OF ESAA PROJECTS

I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is threefold: to acquaint the reader with the contexts in which the 12 ESAA projects in the Site Study operated; to describe the organizational structure of those 12 projects; and to present information on the funding of the 12 projects. The chapter is divided into two major sections, one addressing project context and structure, the second addressing project funding.

II. PROJECT CONTEXT AND STRUCTURE

The variables discussed below were chosen for study because, based on our literature review and our experience with different Federal educational programs, we felt that they might contribute to an understanding of parental involvement in ESAA projects. More specifically, we anticipated that these variables would help explain the nature and extent of parental involvement activities, as they were carried out on site. The degree to which our expectations were realized will be developed in subsequent chapters.

The information presented below is summarized across all 12 sites; at the end of the chapter, similar information wil be presented on a site-specific basis--through what we term capsule summaries. In both treatments, we have organized the variables into four major categories: community, district, school, and project. The Federal Programs Survey provided basic information on several of the variables, but the survey data were verified and augmented during the collection of Site Study data.

COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS

The 12 ESAA projects participating in the Site Study were located in communities that represented a fairly wide range of characteristics. They were geographically distributed throughout the United States with the exception that none was located in the Northwest.

Location	Number of Districts
Northeast	3
Southeast	3
Midwest	3
Southwest	3
Northwest	0

The size of the community ranged from a dot on the map to some of the nation's largest cities.

Nature	Number of Districts
Large city, over 200,000 population	4
Suburb of a city	3
Middle-size city, 50,000-200,000 population	3
Small city or town, less than 50,000 population	1
Rural area	1

At most of the sites in the ESAA sample, some students were bused from one community to another for purposes of desegregation. Thus, the racial ethnic composition of communities in which the sample schools were located differed from that in which many of the bused-in students lived. The following tables indicate that while the majority of schools were situated in predominantly White communities, the majority of communities from which students were bused were predominantly Black.

Ethnicity

School Location	Number of Schools	Bused-in Student Location	Number* of Schools
Majority White	11	Majority White	4
Majority Black	8	Majority Black	12
Majority Hispanic	0	Majority Hispanic	2
Mixture (no ethnic majority)	4	Mixture (no ethnic majority)	4

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*Schools add up to 22 because one school in the sample was a magnet school and students came from all over the city.

DISTRICT CHARACTERISTICS

Participating districts ranged from very small to very large. Large districts were generally located in cities, while small districts were located in rural areas or small towns. District enrollment did not constitute a continuum, but fell into the following clusters.

District Enrollment	Number of Districts
100,000 and over	1
60,000 - 80,000	4
25,000 - 45,000	3
8,000 - 10,000	1
500 - 3,000	3

All of the districts participating in the Site Study received funds, in addition to ESAA funds, from one or more of the programs under study (Title I, Follow Through, and Title VII Bilingual).

District Enrollment	Number of Districts
Title I, FT, Title VII Bilingual	2
Title I, Title VII Bilingual	4
Title I	6

(Note: Combinations that did not occur are not shown on the table.)

SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS

The 23 elementary schools participating in the Site Study ranged from very small to very large. The majority of schools, however, were fairly large, containing between 400 and 800 students.

School Enrollment	Number of Schools
800 - 999	1
600 - 799	7
400 - 599	11
200 - 399	3
000 - 199	1

The grade range in the participating schools showed several configurations. These differences represented both conventional, local patterns of school grade arrangement, and special patterns devised by districts for the purposes of desegregation.

Grade Range	Number of Schools
K-12	1
K-8	2
K-6	8
K-5	2
K-4	2
K-3	2
1-6	1
2-6	1
4-8	1
K, 4-6	1
K, 5-6	2

Low income students, as defined by eligibility for free/reduced lunch or AFDC, were present in each of the participating schools.

Percentage of Low-Income Students	Number of Schools
76-100%	1
51-75%	6
26-50%	7
0-25%	1
(no data)	8

Very few students in the sampled schools came from non-English speaking homes.

Percentage of Students from Non-English Speaking Homes	Number of Schools
76-100%	0
51-75%	0
26-50%	0
0-25%	16
(no data)	7

The ethnic composition of the participating schools closely paralleled that of the communities in which bused-in students lived. The majority of schools were predominantly Black with Whites, Hispanics, and Asians in the minority.

Ethnicity	Number of Schools
Majority White	5
Majority Black	12
Majority Hispanic	2
Mixture (no ethnic majority)	4

PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS

Project Age

The length of operation of projects in the Site Study ranged from short to long.

Length of Operation	Number of Projects
1-3 years	2
4-6 years	7
7-9 years	3

The 23 schools in the Site Study sample exhibited a similar range of funding longevity.

Duration	Number of Schools
1-3 years	6
4-6 years	9
7-9 years	5
(no data)	3

The Design of Student Services

At every site but two, services were delivered to students at the schools. One project offered no student services (teacher training only) and one project provided multicultural activities for served students at a magnet school, in addition to activities at the sample school.

Point of Delivery of Student Services	Number of Projects
At the sample schools	10
At the sample school and a magnet school	1
No student services	1

The majority of projects provided student services within the regular classroom, while other projects provided pull-out instruction or a combination of in-class and pull-out/after school activities.

Type of Student Services	Number of Projects
In class	6
Pull-out	2
In class plus pull-out or after school	3
No student services	1

Project Objectives Addressed to Parental Involvement

Projects indicated that they had a wide range of formal objectives for parental involvement. Many listed understanding and supporting children in the educational process and membership in the advisory council as primary objectives of the project. (Projects do not equal 12 since projects listed multiple objectives.)

Objectives for Parental Involvement	Number of Projects
Understand/support children's education	6
Membership in the DAC/SAC	5
Receive project information	3
Provide input into the project	2
Adjust to desegregation	2
Observe the project	2
Volunteer services to project	1
Enhance cross-cultural and interpersonal relationships	1

Project Provisions for Parental Involvement

Projects reportedly provided parents a number of avenues for involvement. Advisory committees were the most common mechanism for parent participation in the project. Some other activities reported by project personnel were parent education and training sessions and the opportunity to participate as paid instructional aides.

Provisions for Parental Involvement	Number of Projects
District Advisory Committees	12
Paid Instructional Aides	6
Parent Education/Training	4
Community Relations Activities	9
School Support/Volunteers	6
Racial/Ethnic Councils	1
Home Tutoring	1

Project Personnel

At the district level, all projects were administered by a Project Director. However, Project Directors were assisted in their duties by various coordinators and specialists. (Projects do not equal 12 because projects cited multiple administrators.)

Project Personnel	Number of Projects
Project Director	12
Parent Coordinator	3
Component Coordinator	2
Math/Reading Specialists	2
Principal	2
District Coordinator	1
Council Coordinator	1
Staff Development Coordinator	1
Human Relations Coordinator	1
Director of Elementary Education	1
Career Development Specialists	1

III. PROJECT FUNDING

Funding considerations are potentially important influences on the design and implementation of Federal education program components. Therefore, Field Researchers in the Site Study were responsible for collecting information on several aspects of ESAA funding arrangements. Our ultimate objective in seeking these data was to examine the relationship between such variables as grant size and quantity/quality of parental involvement. The results of these relational analyses are presented in Chapter 8 of this volume. Here we will simply describe the information gathered about the nature of funding for the 12 ESAA projects, in the hope that the reader will better understand the structure and organization of these projects.

The Field Researchers attempted to obtain data on the following areas of ESAA funding:

- Funding levels, including the amounts provided to the districts and schools by ESAA and by other sources (local, state, other Federal, etc.).
- The person(s) controlling expenditures within districts and schools.
- Allocations made for parental involvement activities, including the nature and purpose of the activities.
- Timing of the funding, including the length of the grant period for district and schools, as well as the time of year that monies were made available.

We will introduce data in each of these areas but first a note of caution. The quality of our data on funding is not as good as we would like. During both the Federal Programs Survey and the Site Study, we encountered two significant problems in collecting funding information. First, many projects did not have available in one location the type of information we sought, which frequently meant that respondents had to go to multiple sources for answers to our questions and had to report data about which they had no direct knowledge. Second, and probably more important, projects and districts used a variety of methods for accounting for funding information. This lack of uniformity across sites meant that there was no way of knowing whether respondents had the same referent as they answered our questions.

For example, in the area of allocations for parental involvement, different districts were clearly including different items as costs of parental involvement. Some districts would count the salary of a Parent Coordinator as a parental involvement expense; others would include such a person's salary as a personnel line-item rather than a parental involvement allocation. Accordingly, we present the following information with some reservations. As we discuss findings, we will include some statements about our degree of confidence, based on our assessment of the quality of the underlying data.

FUNDING LEVELS

Site Study projects varied widely in terms of district ESAA grants, as can be seen in Table 3-1. Bench reported the largest grant at approximately 4.3 million, while Savin's grant was only $126,000. Not surprisingly, these two districts, which represented extremes in funding, also represented extremes in size; Bench was a major metropolitan area and Savin was a small, rural, farming community. In general, however, there was no direct relationship between district size and amount of grant. For example, Newcastle and Hare were both large city districts, yet their grant sizes fell below the median level. On the whole, we regard the data on grant size as accurate.

With respect to the amount of grants to schools, our data were very uneven. Fully half of the districts reported these amounts to be 0, stating that only services not monies were provided to schools. Other districts tried to attach a dollar figure to the services offered to the target schools. At Merchant, this latter approach was especially appropriate, since the district consisted of only an elementary and high school; thus, Merchant respondents simply calculated the cost of services going to elementary youngsters.

We also sought data on all funds, i.e., Federal, state, local, available to a district (anticipating that district wealth might relate to parental involvement activities). Again, a wide range of figures was reported, with Bench and Savin representing the extremes. The intended relational analysis (which will be presented in Chapter 8) was hampered by the fact that 25 percent of the sites were unwilling or unable to provide this information.

Finally, per-pupil expenditure data were requested of participating sites as an indirect measure of district wealth. While we obtained such data from 11 districts and discovered a range from $2,300 to $1,200 per pupil, we are concerned that different accounting systems may be equally important in explaining district-to-district differences as actual variations in dollars spent per pupil.

CONTROL OF EXPENDITURES

At the district level, ESAA funds tended to be controlled by the ESAA Project Director; seven of ten sites reporting information on district control mentioned the Project Director as the key actor.

The information on control at the school level was consistent with the previously reported finding that services, not monies, are offered to project schools. We found only one site (Winchester) at which principals reportedly controlled ESAA funds.

ALLOCATIONS TO PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

The data on direct allocations of ESAA funds to parental involvement demonstrate again the problem of obtaining cost information that is comparable across even a modest sample of districts. Not only were the reported dollar amounts vastly different, but the activities supported tended to be variable from district to district. And the two districts (Merchant and Winchester) with the largest reported direct expenditures for parental involvement provided no breakdown of how these funds were used.

In reflecting on these data, one is led to the conclusion that what was considered a parental involvement cost at one location was not at another. In other words, items that were considered parental involvement costs at some sites, such as DAC expenses or aides' salaries, were not included under parental involvement at other sites where such costs were surely incurred. Thus, the data on district parental involvement allocations are potentially misleading.

Data concerning school-level allocations are probably more reliable. As already noted, many of the schools did not receive project funds *per se*; it is not suprising, therefore, to see that only three sites reported making direct school-level parental involvement allocations.

TIMING OF FUNDING

Our data collection on the timing of funding was intended to determine whether this aspect of funding affected parental involvement. However, there were only minor variations in the timing; except for one site reporting the receipt of monthly installments based on actual expenditures, funds were received in late spring or summer.

	SAVIN	HANDOVER	MERCHANT	WARD	NEWCASTLE	HARE	HARRISON	CHESTER-FIELD	ALPINE	WILLYSTON	WINCHESTER	BENCH
DISTRICT GRANT	126K	264K	355K	510K	528K	720K	828K	1.1M	1.4M	1.5M	1.9M	4.3M
CONTROL AT DISTRICT LEVEL	Superintendent	PD	PD	No data	Central adm. office	PD	No data	Board of Education	PD	PD	ESAA Staff	PD
SCHOOL GRANTS (A AND B)	No money to schools	No money to schools	268K –	No money to schools	No money to schools	No data No data	77K 60K	No money to schools	No money to schools	44K 42K	30K 123K	3K 3K
CONTROL AT SCHOOL LEVEL	N/A	N/A	PD	N/A	N/A	PD	No data	N/A	N/A	Director of Elem. Educ.	Prin. with agree. of PD	PD
PER-PUPIL: EXPENDITURE	1300	No data	2300	2200	1200	1500	1600	1600	2000	1600	1700	2200
OTHER FEDERAL FUNDS	495K	No data	819K	8.5M	9.7M	No data	No data	4.7M	12M	11.3M	9.5M	29.1M
STATE FUNDS	280K	No data	173K	42.4M	61M	No data	No data	43M	9.7M	40.2M		5.7M
LOCAL FUNDS	459K	No data	502K	217.5M	23M	No data	No data	26.8M	171.9M	77.3M	45M (State and local comb.)	195.4M
DISTRICT PI ALLOCATIONS	28K	No data	72K	7K	2K	73K	0	200	6K	3K	225K	No data
SCHOOL PI ALLOCATIONS	N/A	N/A	72K	N/A	N/A	No data	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	9K 9K	1K 1K
WHEN FUNDS RECEIVED	Summer	Summer	Spring, Summer	Spring	Summer	Summer	Summer	Monthly based on expenditures	Summer	Spring, Summer	Spring, Summer	Spring, Summer

LEGEND:

PD = Project Director
K = Thousands
M = Millions
N/A = Not Applicable

Table 3-1. Funding Information

	COMMUNITY				DISTRICT			SCHOOLS					PROJECT					
SITE	LOCATION	NATURE	ETHNICITY		ENROLLMENT	PER PUPIL EXPENDITURE	OTHER FEDERAL PROGRAMS	ENROLLMENT	GRADE RANGE	LOW INCOME STUDENTS	NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING	ETHNICITY	YEARS IN ESAA	GRANT SIZE	SERVICES	KEY PERSONNEL	PROVISIONS FOR PI	SPECIAL FEATURES
			School Location*	Student Location														
ALPINE	Southwest	Large city	Majority Black	Majority White	58,000	2,000	TI, TVII	290	K-3	14%	1%	B/H 70% W 30%	6	1.4M	Classroom instruction and Pull-out	PD	DAC Volunteers PE	Bused youngsters at the two schools in Alpine were predominantly White – at one school they were children of NCOs at an Air Force Base. Schools themselves were located in neighborhoods composed of Black and Hispanic families. The ESAA program had multiple components, each with its own objectives.
			Majority Black and Hispanic	Majority White				390	K-6	28%	3%	B/H 70% W 30%						
BENCH	Northeast	Large city	** Majority White	** Majority Black	75,000	2,200	TI, TVII	540	K-5	37%	8%	B: 55% W: 45%	6	4.3M	Classroom instruction and other services	PD PCs DAC Coord	PCs Aides PE	Large city with a multi-faceted ESAA program. Many program components, each with its own director. One school was a very popular magnet school. Other school was located in a lower middle class White neighborhood; bused youngsters were almost exclusively Black. School had low enrollment due to White flight.
								160	K-5	32%	3%	B: 58% W: 42%						
CHESTERFIELD	Southeast	Middle size city	Mixed Black & White	Majority Black	45,000	1,600	TI	560	K-4	31%	0	W: 60% B: 40%	3	1.1M	Remedial classroom instruction	PD Math supervisor Reading supervisor	DAC Aides	Church is very important social institution in this Southern community. Both schools were located in middle-class surburban neighborhoods. But one neighborhood was racially mixed, with equal numbers of Black and Whites. In both cases, bused youngsters were predominantly Black.
			Majority White	Majority Black				480	K-4	No data	No data	W: 61% B: 39%						
HANDOVER	Northeast	Middle size city	Majority White	Majority Black	27,000	No data	FT, TI, TVII	600	K-8	No data	No data	B: 50% W: 25% H: 25%	4	264K	Remedial classroom instruction	PD	DAC PC	Project director was in first year of job. District engaged in revising desegregation plan in response to new state statutes redefining integrated school environments. One site school located in residential community, composed largely of professional working people. Other located in transition neighborhood; half of children from low income housing project.
			Majority White	Black & Hispanic				630	K-8	No data	No data	Black & Hispanic predominate						

*Most school-related entries in these charts will have two parts, one for each school at a given site.

**School A is a magnet school located in a non-residential neighborhood – 96% of the students are bused in from other areas of the city.

LEGEND:

PROVISIONS FOR PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT (PI)

DAC = District Advisory Committee
SAC = School Advisory Committee
PE = Parent Education

KEY PERSONNEL

PD = Project Director
PC = Parent Coordinator
DAC Coord = District-wide Advisory Committee Coordinator
HR Spec = Human Relations Specialist
ST = Staff Trainer

FEDERAL PROGRAMS

TI = Title I
TVII = Title VII
FT = Follow Through

ETHNICITY

W = White
B = Black
H = Hispanic
A = Asian

ESAA Sites – Capsule Summaries

	COMMUNITY				DISTRICT			SCHOOLS					PROJECT					
SITE	LOCATION	NATURE	ETHNICITY		ENROLLMENT	PER-PUPIL EXPENDITURE	OTHER FEDERAL PROGRAMS	ENROLLMENT	GRADE RANGE	LOW INCOME STUDENTS	NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING	ETHNICITY	YEARS IN ESAA	GRANT SIZE	SERVICES	KEY PERSONNEL	PROVISIONS FOR PI	SPECIAL FEATURES
			School Location	Student Location														
HARE	Midwest	Suburb	B: 98% Majority Black	B: 99% Majority Black	3,000	1,600	TI	470 470	K-6 K-6	No data 66%	0 0	B: 99% Other: 1% B: 99% Other: 1%	5	720K	Classroom instruction & other services	PD PC	DAC PE School support activities	The community was predominantly Black with a low SES. There was much rundown rental housing in the area as a result of White flight 10 years ago. Both schools were in walking distance for the majority of students.
HARRISON	Midwest	Suburb	B: 99% B: 99%	B: 99% B: 99%	8,000	1,600	TI	600 800	K-6 K-6	55% 52%	0 0	B: 99% Other: 1% B: 99% Other: 1%	8	828K	Remedial classroom instruction	PD	DAC	Small suburb annexed to a large inner city, with the same social and economic problems as the inner city. Estimated 20% unemployment in district; fully 65% of children qualified for free or reduced-price lunch. Also sharp decline in school revenues due to loss of industry. High transient population. No busing, minority-isolated community.
MERCHANT*	Midwest	Small town	Mixed	B: 100%	<1,000	2,300	TI	550	K-12	60%	0	B: 70% W: 30%	6	355K	Classroom instruction	PD HR Spec PC	DAC Aides	Small railroad town. Economy built on steel and heavy manufacturing. District was in difficult financial straits. ESAA grant constituted very large percentage (approx. 20%) of total district budget. As a result, the ESAA program director was an especially influential person within the district. Merchant is a one-school district, with the school being predominantly Black.
NEWCASTLE	Southwest	Large city	Mixed Majority White	H: 100% Majority Hispanic	62,000	1,300	TI, TVII	590 920	K-6 K-6	No data No data	No data No data	H: 65% W/B/A: 35% H: 50% W/B: 50%	2	528K	Classroom instruction	PD	DAC	ESAA focus in Newcastle was exclusively on remedial services (ESL, reading, math). ESAA parental participation had reportedly slackened because of this focus and because there were few provocative issues associated with court-ordered busing. The youngsters being bused into the two sample schools were predominantly Hispanic.

*Merchant was a one-school site.

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ESAA Sites — Capsule Summaries

	COMMUNITY				DISTRICT			SCHOOLS					PROJECT					
SITE	LOCATION	NATURE	ETHNICITY		ENROLLMENT	PER PUPIL EXPENDITURE	OTHER FEDERAL PROGRAMS	ENROLLMENT	GRADE RANGE	LOW INCOME STUDENTS	NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING	ETHNICITY	YEARS IN ESAA	GRANT SIZE	SERVICES	KEY PERSONNEL	PROVISIONS FOR PI	SPECIAL FEATURES
			School Location	Student Location														
SAVIN	Southeast	Rural	Majority White	Majority Black	2,000	1,300	TI	520	K-3	75%	0	B: 51% W: 49%	4	264K	Remedial Classroom Instruction	PD	DAC PC liaison	Close-knit, rural farming community. Three-school district, with elementary and high school contiguous, while the middle school is a few miles away. In many cases, youngsters come to school from long distances. Community is basically poor-between 65% and 75% of youngsters qualify for free or reduced lunch.
			Majority White	Majority Black				674	4-8	65%	0	B: 51% W: 49%						
WARD CO.	Northeast	Suburb	W: 50% B: 50%	W: 50% B: 50%	110,000	2,300	TI	404	1-6	37%	8%	W: 54% B: 43% H: 3%	4	510K	Support Services	PC	DAC PC School support activities	Ward Co. is a wealthy suburb of a large city. Desegregation had been managed here without too much overt conflict. Strong, pervasive belief in the professionalism of educators. ESAA program reflects this in that it was basically an educational package for teachers, designed by former teachers. School B, in particular, was attended by the youngsters of several prominent individuals.
			Majority White	Majority Black				450	2-6	No data	No data	W: 60% Other: 40%						
WILLYSTON	Southeast	Large city	Majority Black	Majority White	76,000	1,600	FT, TI, TVII	576	K, 5-6	27%	1%	B: 84% W: 16%	8-9	1.5M	Pull-out	PD Director of Elementary Education	DAC Aides	Both schools were located in predominantly black communities with low to middle class families. These areas ranged from clean, well groomed neighborhoods to a mixture of land uses such as public housing projects, vacant lots and businesses. The district was divided into three subdistricts and the study schools each belonged to a separate subdistrict, with separate directors of elementary education. These directors operated independently from each other and the schools.
			Majority Black	Majority White				342	K, 5-6	No data	No data	B: 56% W/A: 44%						
WINCHESTER	Southwest	Middle size city	Majority White	Mixed Asian, Black, Hispanic & White	26,000	1,800	TI, TVII	600	K-6	30%	25%	W: 43% H: 40% A: 17%	5	1.9M	Remedial Classroom Instruction	PD Dist. PC School PCs ST	DAC SACs Dist. PC School PCs Aides	Historically, a strong citizen's group was instrumental in bringing about desegregation in this middle-sized city. But the group was disbanded after the court-ordered plan was announced and implemented, 3 years prior to Site Study.
			Majority White	Mixed Asian, Black, Hispanic & White				550	K, 4-6	57%	6%	W: 54% B: 27% A: 3%						

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ESAA Sites — Capsule Summaries

CHAPTER 4

THE COORDINATION OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

I. INTRODUCTION

This chapter will describe the nature and extent of efforts to coordinate parental involvement in ESAA-sponsored activities at sites in the Site Study. To present a complete picture of parent coordination, we will report information on: (1) individuals who held a job title of Parent Coordinator or performed exclusively responsibilities generally associated with such a title; and (2) individuals who spent the bulk of their time in capacities other than that of Parent Coordinator, but still managed to devote some time and energy to parent coordination. The phenomenon of parent coordination was examined in the Site Study because, in theory, individuals involved in parent coordination can have considerable influence on the quantity and quality of parental involvement activities offered under the auspices of Federal education programs.

Within the ESAA program the position of Parent Coordinator, also known as Parent Involvement Assistant or Home-School Coordinator, is not mandated through any formal regulations. However, when the Federal Programs Survey was conducted, it was discovered that many of the ESAA sites had full-time or part-time individuals performing parent coordination activities at both district and school levels. These individuals, it was found through our analysis, were generally designated by the ESAA project itself, and were paid directly from ESAA funds.

As is demonstrated by the tables accompanying this section, seven of the 12 ESAA study sites (or 58%) had at least one staff member who conducted or coordinated parent activities regardless of formal role description. Of this total of 14 individuals, 71 percent were district-level coordinators, and 29 percent were school-level. These figures parallel the findings of the FPS report, which estimated that 78 percent of the nationwide ESAA districts had district-level coordinators, and 36 percent had school-level coordinators. However, we discovered few major differences in the types of responsibilities performed by district and school coordinators. The data did suggest a tendency toward district-level coordinators getting more involved in the development and coordination of parent involvement activities, while the school-level coordinators were more involved in the implementation of activities. But, on the other hand, we found both types of coordinators performing similar duties such as visiting the parents in the homes, and recruiting them for participation. Thus, the treatment of parent coordination in this section will not focus on a comparison of district- and school-level coordinators, but rather will report on roles and activities in the aggregate.

Going into the Site Study we anticipated that the provision of district- or school-level parent coordination would be related to the size of a project's total ESAA grant; this turned out not to be the case for the study sites. Instead, provision of parent coordination was associated with the percentage of the total ESAA grant allocated to parent involvement. At nearly all of the sites at which the parental involvement allocation was greater than 10 percent of the total grant, one or more Parent Coordinators were operating.

Conversely, at those sites where the percentages were considerably lower than 10 percent, no Parent Coordinators existed.

PLAN FOR THE CHAPTER

The chapter consists of six parts. Following the Introduction, Part II presents a discussion of the general roles which individuals involved in parent coordination played at the Site Study sites. Part III addresses specifically those sites at which coordination was being handled by someone other than a designated Parent Coordinator. Part IV treats the data on characteristics of individuals performing parent coordination functions. Part V analyzes the specific activities in which Parent Coordinators tended to engage; this part is subdivided into the functional areas of conceptual interest in the study--e.g., instructional process, and parent education. Finally, Part VI summarizes the major findings on the coordination of parental involvement developed throughout the chapter.

II. GENERAL ROLES FOR PARENT COORDINATION

As already noted, the present study defined the area of parent coordination broadly so that it included individuals who have both full- or part-time responsibilities for developing and coordinating parent participation in ESAA project activities. The ESAA activities to be coordinated might involve any or all of the following:

- DAC/SAC functioning
- Parents involved in instructional roles (i.e., aides, volunteers, home tutors)
- Parent education
- Efforts at school support (e.g., classroom speakers, field trip chaperones)

On the whole, Site Study individuals doing parent coordination (on either a full- or part-time basis) played three kinds of roles with respect to these activities--facilitator, conveyor of information, and provider of instruction. As major facilitators, individuals involved in parent coordination performed duties designed to support, promote, and make easier parental participation in one or more of the functional areas. For example, coordination associated with the DAC/SAC included, on occasion, recruiting members, publicizing meetings, and arranging for guest speakers. Or in the area of parent education, coordination centered on planning the content of classes and arranging/organizing the logistics of classes.

In addition to the role of facilitator, individuals performing parent coordination tended to act as conveyors of information among project, school, and ESAA parents. In fact, one of the major findings from this study revealed that both district- and school-level coordinators developed, with little supervision, into primary disseminators of ESAA information. They became the focal point for information regarding the ESAA project in general, and for activities calling for the participation of ESAA parents. Communication strategies employed by them encompassed both one- and two-way methods. School newsletters, flyers sent to the homes, and other forms of posted notices were examples of the one-way flow of communication often used by Parent Coordinators. However, it was their ability to carry out personal or two-way communication which gave Parent Coordinators significant influence within ESAA projects. Frequently, they were the only members of the project staff who visited the homes or talked to the parents by telephone. And they did so for a variety of reasons: to report student progress, to recruit parents for assemblies or field trips, to provide homebound teaching, and to provide individual counseling assistance for parents in need. Since most people involved in parent coordination came from the parent ranks themselves, a role naturally developed for them as a liaison among parents, school, and project. ESAA parents tended to utilize the knowledge and position of the Parent Coordinators to discuss specific topics of concern, and in turn Parent Coordinators discussed those concerns with other project or school staff. Further, on at least one occasion, Parent Coordinators, acting as conveyors of information, drafted letters or petitions to state or city school departments on behalf of the ESAA parents, representing their point of view on a particular issue.*

Finally, Site Study Parent Coordinators also at times assumed the role of a trainer. At four sites, coordinators provided some amount of training and/or technical assistance for DAC/SAC members; at two sites they conducted home tutoring workshops for the parents who were interested in instructing their own children at home; and at two sites they operated parenting workshops which covered such topics as planned parenthood, child abuse, and student rights.

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*Special mention should be made here of the Project Coordinator at Savin who took a major hand in attempting to generate parental involvement. This individual expended considerable effort in ensuring that the available ESAA-sponsored parent involvement activities received extensive publicity both in the local schools and in the media. She principally did this through press releases, brochures, and newsletters, and through her personal involvement with the parent aides, DAC, and community/home outreach programs. Her strong belief in parental involvement, and her enthusiasm for generating parent participation in the various ESAA activities contributed in a fundamental way to the ESAA program at Savin.

For a complete range of the roles that Site Study Parent Coordinators fill, please refer to Table 4-2 in this section.

III. OTHER FORMS OF PARENT COORDINATION

Within the seven ESAA study sites that reported having individuals who performed parent coordination functions, it should be noted that two of them (Savin and Handover) did not have designated or formal Parent Coordinators *per se*. Rather, they had other staff members who performed parent coordination activities in conjunction with their own regular responsibilities. As will be demonstrated in Table 4-2, the individuals at Savin especially engaged in parent coordination efforts for many of the major functional areas, such as the instructional process, DAC involvement, and comprehensive services. (The individual at Handover was much more limited in the scope of her activities; in fact she had only recently tried to carve out a minor role for herself in actively promoting widespread parental involvement.) It is interesting to note that a common coordination effort at Savin and Handover was the provision of training to instruct parents in how to be effective teachers of their own children at home. In fact, these two sites were the only ones with any Parent Coordinator involvement in the instructional or educational process. None of the formally designated ESAA Parent Coordinators had any influence over or involvement with the hiring or use of parents in the paid aide or volunteer component, nor in the development/implementation of home tutoring programs.

IV. CHARACTERISTICS OF INDIVIDUALS INVOLVED IN PARENT COORDINATION

Table 4-1 presents data on the characteristics of individuals (both designated and non-designated) who played a role in parent coordination at those seven sites reporting any coordination. A major finding emerging from the table was that people involved in coordination tended to come to the job with some knowledge about the ESAA project and its primary functions. Indeed, each of them had had prior working experience in the project as volunteers, aides, or teacher assistants. This experience was of particular significance in light of the fact that it appeared as if pre- or in-service training was quite limited for individuals assuming this role.

Attitudes can of course be a significant contributor to the success or failure of parental involvement programs. Because persons involved in coordination are frequently responsible for promoting or generating activities, we tried to collect information on their attitudes toward the ESAA project, parental involvement, and parents in general.

Basically, specific data concerning Parent Coordinator attitudes toward the ESAA project were limited. Most coordinators reported generally positive feelings toward the project, but they did not make specific comments about various aspects of the project. However, at one site (Merchant), although the coordinator was positive in terms of the focus of the ESAA Program, she reported scepticism about the project's ability to get parents involved. She felt that although the project was making a legitimate attempt, too many of the parents were apathetic. Coordinators' attitudes regarding parental involvement were also primarily positive, but a few variations were noted.

At Bench, one of the school-level coordinators was an advocate of a broad range of parent involvement endeavors, while the other was positive only in a limited sense. The latter coodinator felt parents should confine their participation to advisory council activities. Therefore, she did nothing to move them in the direction of school support, parent education, or instructional functions. At yet another site (Hare), the district-level coordinator stated that while she was very much in favor of parent participation, she did feel that the more important district decisions should be made by those with the most expertise--the administrators. Additionally, at Winchester, the Parent Coordinator viewed parent involvement as strictly information provision and services to parents. Although her attitudes were positive, she did not see broad avenues for parent participation. She perceived her role as revolving around one central theme: providing ESAA information, and assisting parents with problems. In sum the attitudes of coordinators toward parents were mostly favorable, but sometimes carried a dual message based on the perception that parents tend to be apathetic.

For a complete tabulation of information on Parent Coordinator characteristics, please refer to Table 4-1. In addition to the information presented above, the table reveals that at study sites, people involved in coordination were typically female and over 30 years of age. One characteristic of coordinators not reported is the method by which they came to be hired or selected. Little information was gathered in this realm. However, since so many individuals performing coordination were formerly volunteers, aides, or teacher assistants, it seems safe to assume that they rose to their positions through interest and special capabilities rather than through district appointments from the professional ranks.

V. PARENT COORDINATION ACTIVITIES

This section will present a systematic review of the activities in which individuals doing parent coordination were engaged. The section will be organized according to the functional areas which represent the foci for the study--e.g., parental involvement in the instructional process, or parent education. Please note that distinctions between designated and non-designated individuals involved in parent coordination will not be made in this section. Responsibilities and duties will be described in the aggregate, and references will be made to the term "Parent Coordinator," regardless of established title and full-time/part-time considerations.

INVOLVEMENT WITH PARENT ADVISORY COMMITTEES (DACs/SACs)

As can be seen in Table 4-2, at five of the seven sites that had Parent Coordinators, the coordinators had some association with parent advisory committees (DACs/SACs).* This finding was consistent with the national projections of the FPS report. Although the level of involvement varied from site to site, the following DAC/SAC-related activities were cited by Parent Coordinators in at least one site:

- Increasing and maintaining DAC/SAC membership through active recruitment
- Attending and helping to schedule meetings
- Providing logistical support such as taking minutes, soliciting guest speakers, arranging for reimbursement of transportation costs
- Conducting workshops to educate DAC/SAC officers about the functioning of the ESAA program

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*At Bench the school-level coordinators worked with a non-ESAA advisory committee, while at Winchester some coordination activities centered on ESAA school-level advisory committees.

The most prevalent activity of Parent Coordinators with respect to ESAA advisory committees was encouraging parent attendance and participation at meetings. Some coordinators actually went door-to-door, promoting involvement in the advisory committee among parents of ESAA-served students. The success of such efforts was quite variable depending on: (1) the level of interest on the part of parents in learning about the ESAA program and what parents can do to contribute to its success; (2) the level of motivation on the part of coordinators toward advancing parental participation, and (3) the attitudes of ESAA staff and administrators, who frequently failed to see active roles in their projects for parents.

Thus, the extent to which Parent Coordinators became critical to the operations of DAC/SACs also varied considerably. At one site (Hare), the DAC members were reportedly so adamant about the positive contributions of the two Parent Coordinators, to the district at large and to the DAC specifically, that they initiated a resolution to increase the number of coordinators to one at each school in the district. At another site, the Parent Coordinator did not view her role as being closely involved with the ESAA advisory group and participation in governance. Rather she viewed her appropriate responsibility as lying in the realm of trouble-shooting with individual parents and acting as a disseminator of information about ESAA. Consequently she did little to advance parental involvement in general or involvement with the DAC in particular.

INVOLVEMENT IN THE INSTRUCTIONAL PROCESS

As was stated previously, none of the people carrying out ESAA parent coordination at the study sites had any involvement with the paid paraprofessional aspect of the instructional process domain. (Further, there were no active ESAA volunteer components at our sites, so no opportunities for coordinator involvement existed in this area.) At two locations (Savin and Handover), however, Parent Coordinators did play a role in the component developed to instruct parents in ways to tutor their children at home. Although such a role was being filled at only two sites, some significant consequences were being realized.

At Savin, especially, three of the individuals performing parent coordination functions became the central figures in involving ESAA parents in the teaching of their own children. Generally, their duties included:

- Recruiting parents
- Raising the confidence and interest of parents in learning tutoring skills
- Providing instructional materials
- Conducting formal and informal training sessions

Because most of the recruiting and instructing of parents occurred through door-to-door contact by the coordinators, parents not only received instruction in home tutoring but also received pertinent information about the project and the school without ever leaving their homes. Such a situation served to maneuver the Parent Coordinators into a role of general liaison between the project itself and the school and community. (For further details, please see the part which addresses "Involvement with Community-School Relations.")

This role of coordinator, serving as general liaison, had not only heightened the interest of the parents in their children's education, but had served to broaden the perspectives of the individuals involved in coordination. Consequently, parents came to view the coordinators not only as instructors of home tutoring skills but also as important counseling sources for parents needing individual assistance with their problems (e.g., child truancy, joblessness, parenting decisions). Further, the coordinators were regarded as major outlets for information concerning the ESAA project, the school, and the community at large.

INVOLVEMENT WITH PARENT EDUCATION

Turning to coordinator involvement in what we have termed parent education activities, the data suggested that in those four ESAA sites where parent education programs were offered, Parent Coordinators were frequently the ones who directly implemented the activities. Their involvement included:

- Organizing and designing parent education workshops
- Recruiting parent participants
- Conducting or assisting with the actual training
- Dealing with logistics, such as setting the date, time, and place of the workshops
- Providing any necessary guest speakers and/or materials

The coordinators at Hare and Winchester served as primary instructors in such parent education areas as self-improvement, leadership development, and community awareness. More importantly, they were key decision makers concerning what parent education activities should be offered, how they should be presented, and when they should be given.

While specific outcomes are not known in terms of the particular effectiveness of the Parent Coordinators in this role, the data suggest that the parent education workshops were normally well attended by parents in the community. But, even though there was a consistently high turnout for these workshops, negative attitudes on the part of school personnel (as was the case at Hare), hampered participation by parents.

INVOLVEMENT WITH SCHOOL SUPPORT

As can be seen in Table 4-2, the majority of the Parent Coordinators did not participate in any form of school support functions. School Support, for our purposes, referred to any parental resources that could be utilized to support the project--resources that go beyond the capability of the school itself to provide. For example, parents might act as speakers in classrooms or assemblies, raise funds for extracurricular school activities, or perform as chaperones on field trips. They might also provide non-tangible support by assisting with such matters as the passage of school finance levies. Despite the potential importance of parental involvement in this area, the only coordinators who reportedly became involved were those at Ward and Savin. And at neither of these sites did work in the School Support area constitute the major thrust of coordinators' efforts.

INVOLVMENT WITH COMMUNITY-SCHOOL RELATIONS

As was mentioned under the section "Involvement with the Instructional Process," the Parent Coordinators had developed into important disseminators of ESAA information at the seven target sites. Because of their frequent contact with the parents, most of the coordinators perceived themselves as the liaison person between the ESAA project, the parents, and the school. As such, they performed the following functions:

- Organizing monthly school newsletters for ESAA parents
- Arranging/conducting district-wide conferences that are designed to generate unity and involvement by the DAC, parents, ESAA staff, and students
- Playing the role of an advocate

- Discovering why children have not been in school

- Creating and printing materials for use at school assemblies

School-parent communication is probably a critical element at schools that participate in desegregation programs. Schools need to know the concerns, interests, and desires of parents when designing and executing desegregation-related activities. And, parents need to know the particulars of the special services that the school provides to participating students. Thus, coordinator activity in the realm of dissemination of information became one of the most important functions they performed at districts and schools in the Site Study. The Parent Coordinators at all of the seven target sites were responsible for building a strong communication link between the project and the parents of served students, and for encouraging the participation by these parents in ESAA-sponsored activities. Dissemination took place by means of formal newsletters, flyers, special verbal announcements at parent group meetings, and during the course of home visits.

At some sites coordinators perceived their communication role as extending beyond merely dispensing information. For example, the coordinators at Bench helped parents draft letters and petitions to the State or Education Department whenever there was a major issue they wished to address. And another Parent Coordinator at Savin successfully encouraged some parents to return to high school so that they could effectively help their children overcome specific reading or math difficulties. Such communication was not entirely one-way; parents typically saw the Parent Coordinators as vehicles for voicing their concerns about the project or about school policies. In a few instances, the Parent Coordinators were the only project staff that the parents felt comfortable with, or with whom they would interact. This is not surprising in light of the fact that most coordinators were parents themselves, who rose to the job through the regular ranks of the school (e.g., volunteers, aides, and teacher assistants) rather than through appointment from the district professional ranks. Thus, they tended to be people with whom parents could readily identify.

INVOLVEMENT IN PROVIDING SOCIAL SERVICES

In addition to playing some role in the functional areas which represent the foci for this study, Parent Coordinators at over half of the study sites provided some form of social service assistance for parents. These activities encompassed:

- Counseling parents who had problems (not just ESAA-related)
- Referring parents to needed community services
- Counseling students who had been truant and who may have family difficulties

During their home visits, Parent Coordinators seized the opportunity to spend a fair amount of time in providing such services. They were themselves quite knowledgeable about services available in the community and, therefore, were often successful in refering parents to the resources that they needed. And, again because of their credibility with parents, coordinators were able to proffer advice and assistance in the areas of parenting, self-awareness, and survival skills without threatening parents.

VI. SUMMARY

This section is intended to summarize the major findings about parent coordination discovered during analysis. To reiterate, we found that at those sites where individuals were carrying out ESAA parent coordination duties, these individuals developed, without much supervision, into major disseminators of ESAA information. To put it another way, coordinators became the focal point for information about the ESAA project in general and parental involvement activities in particular. As a corollary to their placement at the hub of communications, coordinators at a few sites evolved into intermediaries among the project, schools, and served parents. As significant intermediaries, a few coordinators were cast into the influential position of being able to interpret the mandate for project-related parental involvement according to their own predilections. Therefore, when Parent Coordinators tended to view the role of ESAA as simply keeping parents informed about project services to children, this was frequently the extent of their activities. However, when they tended to view themselves as advocates for actual parental participation in ESAA-sponsored activities, Parent Coordinators were usually successful in carving out a prominent role for themselves in generating parent participation, especially in the areas of home tutoring and parent education.

Another major finding is that many of the people engaged in parent coordination at the seven target sites were aided in their work by the fact that they were former parents themselves, with prior experience as aides and/or volunteers. This caused parents to both trust coordinators and look upon them as models through which they could identify potential growth for themselves. For example, at Savin the coordinators were actually able to encourage some parents to return to high school in order to better help their children at home with reading or math tutoring. And, at Bench, coordinators assisted the parents in drafting letters or petitions to the state or school departments regarding issues they (the parents) wished to address.

However, according to the coordinators themselves the most important factors contributing to the success or failure of their efforts were the attitudes of the individuals with whom they worked--i.e., the parents, the school and district administrators. For example, at one site (Merchant) where the project was making a legitimate attempt to get parents involved, the coordinator reported that many of the parents remained apathetic, and only a small core participated regularly in any activities. At yet another site (Ward), it was reported that the coordinator was essentially the only person in the ESAA program who really believed in the importance of parental involvement. But, given the design of the project, which established few actual roles for parents, the coordinator was basically ineffective in organizing any form of parental involvement beyond some minor school support function-related activities.

On the whole, there did seem to be some relationship between sites which afforded the greatest opportunities for parental involvement in individual functional areas (i.e., either governance, instruction, parent education, or school support) and the provision of parent coordination services. In other words, sites at which the chances for parental participation in any of the functional areas seemed greatest also tended to have individuals who performed parent coordination duties. We hasten to add that this does not mean that sites with Parent Coordinators had a high degree of participation throughout all functional areas. As the reader will see throughout the course of this report, there were no such sites. However, at Hare where we found a burgeoning parent education program, or at Savin which conducted a successful home tutoring effort, individuals involved in parent coordination were reportedly integral to the success of these activities.

	FULL TIME					PART TIME	
	HARE	WINCHESTER	BENCH	WARD	MERCHANT	SAVIN	HANDOVER
NUMBER AND SEX	3F	1F	2F	1F	1F	5F (Project Coordinator, Reading Supervisor, Community Aides)	1F (Community Liaison)
TYPE	1 District 2 School	District	District	District	District	5 District	District
AGE	1: 30s 1: 40s 1: no data	1: 50	2: 30s	1: 30s	1: 20s	3: 30s 2: 50s	No data
ETHNICITY	1W 2B	1B	2W	1W	1B	1W 4B	No data
EDUCATION	2: HS 1: no data	1: HS+	1: HS 1: C	1: C	1: C	3: HS 2: C	1: C
PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE	2: vol./aide 1: no data	1: aide	2: vol.	1: teacher assistant	1: teacher assistant	4: aides 1: Project Coordinator	1: vol./aide
TRAINING	No data	On the job	Formal, on the job	None	No data	N/A	N/A
ATTITUDE TOWARD PROJECT	●	●	No data	○	◒	●	◒
ATTITUDE TOWARD PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT	◒	◒	1: ● 1: ○	◒	◒	●	◒
ATTITUDE TOWARD PARENTS	●	●	1: ● 1: ⊖	◒	○	●	◒

LEGEND:

ETHNICITY

B = Black
W = White

EDUCATION

HS = High school graduate
HS+ = Some college
C = College graduate

EXPERIENCE

Vol = Volunteer

ATTITUDES

● = Very positive
◒ = Positive
⊖ = Negative
○ = Neutral

Table 4–1. Characteristics of Parent Coordinators

		FULL TIME					PART TIME	
		HARE	WINCHESTER	BENCH	WARD	MERCHANT	SAVIN	HANDOVER
INVOLVEMENT WITH DACs/SACs		Active at meetings Provide info. and materials Does some training	Active at meetings Provide info. and materials Does some training	Active at meetings Provide info. and materials Does some training	None	Provide some info. and materials	Provide info. and materials Does some training	None
EDUCATION	PAID AIDES	N/A	No involvement	N/A	N/A	No involvement	No involvement	N/A
	VOLUNTEERS	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	HOME TUTORING	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Recruit Train Monitor	Recruit Train
PARENT EDUCATION		Conduct workshops Recruit Arrange for speakers	Conduct workshops Recruit Arrange for speakers	Arrange for workshops	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SCHOOL SUPPORT		No involvement	N/A	Coordinate parent letter-writing campaigns	Recruit parents to volunteer as speakers	No involvement	Recruit parents to help at special events	N/A
COMMUNITY-SCHOOL RELATIONS		Organize events	Provide info. to parents Serve as liaison	Provide info. to parents Serve as liaison	No involvement	Provide info. to parents Serve as liaison	Provide info. to parents Serve as liaison Organize events	Provide info. to parents Serve as liaison Organize events
SOCIAL SERVICES		N/A	Provide counseling and referrals	N/A	N/A	Provide counseling and referrals	Provide counseling and referrals	Provide counseling and referrals

LEGEND:
N/A = No such activity at the site.

Table 4-2. Activities of Parent Coordinators

CHAPTER 5
NATURE OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN ESAA GOVERNANCE

I. INTRODUCTION

This chapter will analyze the extent to which parents are involved in the governance of ESAA projects at sites in the Site Study. Parental participation in the governance of ESAA programs has its roots in the concept of participatory democracy. This concept holds that, in a democracy, citizens have the right to participate in the forming of policies and the making of decisions that may affect their lives. The concept was formally articulated in the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 with the now-famous requirement that poverty programs be developed with the "maximum feasible participation of residents of the areas and the members of the groups served."

The specification of parental participation in the governance of ESAA programs involves a generalization of the "maximum feasible participation" phrase to parents having a say in their children's education. Educational decision making has been traditionally the province of professionals, with little citizen involvement except through school boards. Poor and/or minority parents have not had access to decision makers. Congress sought to change this with the legislation for various Federal programs including ESAA.

For the present study, we defined "governance" as meaning participation in making decisions or establishing policies which can affect project/district services or activities. More specifically, during the Site Study we looked for instances of parents being involved in giving advice or making suggestions to ESAA staff and/or the LEA--advice which was heeded and led to action. (Based on findings from the Federal Programs Survey, we did not expect to find parents actually having sole decision prerogatives in any ESAA project matters.)

The Site Study examined the nature and extent of parental involvement in decisions about both the planning and implementation of the project. Planning consisted primarily of proposal development and review. Participation in implementation decisions could be centered on the content of project services, the hiring and firing of project personnel, and project expenditures.

There are other decision areas that could have been examined as well as these three. Among them are decisions regarding the structure and operation of a parent advisory group itself. We concluded that decision making on, for instance, meeting dates or membership requirements, was of lesser importance than decisions focused on the project and its procedures for achieving student objectives. In addition, three mechanisms by which parents might participate in ESAA governance were investigated: as members of mandated District-wide Advisory Committees (DACs); as members of non-mandated school advisory committees; and informally as individuals or as members of organizations other than the DAC. In practice, only one of 12 study sites had school advisory committees in operation, and none reported having prominent individual parents or other organizations playing a role in project decision making. Therefore, this chapter will concentrate solely on DACs as the identified means by which parents can assume some responsibility for ESAA governance.

PLAN FOR THE CHAPTER

This chapter consists of four parts. The remainder of Part I contains an introduction to the regulatory requirements addressing governance in ESAA and an overview of the Study's key findings regarding the role of parents in governance. Part II presents the major Site Study findings on the structure, membership, support features, and functioning of ESAA DACs. As will be the convention throughout this report, we will not discuss in the text all aspects of the data collected. Instead, we will focus on the major findings which emerge from the Site Study and use tables to summarize, in a site by site fashion, the specific data. The reader is, therefore, encouraged to look carefully at the tables to satisfy personal information needs.

Part III is an analysis of some of the factors that serve to explain the major findings about parental involvement in governance, along with a discussion of personal and institutional outcomes stemming from this involvement. Finally, in Part IV, we will offer some suggestions, based on our Site Study data, to national and local policy makers who may be interested in enhancing parental participation in the governance of ESAA projects.

GOVERNANCE IN THE ESAA REGULATIONS

The program regulations mandate District-wide Advisory Committees (DACs) as the potential mechanisms for parental involvement in project governance. We use the term "potential" because, as will be demonstrated, the ESAA regulations do not state explicitly that DACs must participate in project/district decision making, as defined in the Site Study.

The regulations in place at the time of the Site Study required that an LEA must form a DAC before submission of an application for ESAA assistance. At least half of the members of this DAC must be parents of children to be affected by the proposed project, while at least five civic or community groups are also to be represented. The DAC is expected to consult with the LEA in identifying problems and assessing the needs to be addressed by the proposal and in reviewing/commenting upon the proposal once drafted. Moreover, if assistance is granted, the DAC must be consulted by the LEA at least once a month about policy matters arising in the administration and operation of project activities.

However, there is no insistence in the regulations that DACs be involved as project decision-making bodies. At most, the regulations can be said to describe, broadly speaking, a consultative capacity for the DAC in the areas of development and implementation of project activities. They do not specify what the duties of the DAC ought to be.

Finally, it is interesting to note that at least some of the Site Study sites were setting up DACs on the basis of the 1978 Educational Amendments, even though regulations based on those Amendments had not been promulgated at the time of data collection. Indeed, there seemed to be a measure of confusion in the minds of some people on-site over what guidelines ought to be followed in constituting their DACs.

SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS

Although the data on the overall structure and operations of DACs will be discussed in this chapter, the central question to be addressed remains: What role do parents play in project governance as members of ESAA DACs? Three key findings related to this question emerged from analyses of the data. They are summarized below and discussed in greater detail later in the chapter.

- All of the Site Study sites had established DAC's, which were operating during the period of the study.

- On the whole, DACs at the sites were doing very little. None could be regarded as a true decision-/policy-making body. Few even participated in generating serious advice for ESAA staff, let alone making decisions.

- Although overall none of the Site Study DACs qualified as a decision-making group, four DACs did levy advice and suggestions which were considered seriously by project staff and led to occasional changes. They seem to have been, in other words, genuine participants in the decision-making process, although not decision makers.

In addition, there are a number of subsidiary findings which elaborate and support these major findings. Accordingly, patterns in the descriptive data across the 12 sites will be highlighted as they relate to the primary theme of little governance activity, or as they seem to contribute to the relatively higher activity levels at the four sites. A finely-grained portrait emerges of structural, membership, and support characteristics which are consistent with the major findings.

II. SITE STUDY FINDINGS: PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN ESAA ADVISORY COMMITTEES

As already noted, District-wide Advisory Committees (DACs) are the mandated means by which parents and other community people are expected to play a part in the governance of ESAA projects. As such, DACs became the focal point for data collection in the governance realm. We gathered extensive descriptive information on: the overall structure of DACs and logistical arrangements established for their meetings; the characteristics of members and processes for their selection; and those elements of DAC operations which might influence parents' ability to play a meaningful role on the DAC--e.g., programmatic support, communication channels.

Most importantly, the Site Study generated considerable data on what DACs actually do. The intent was to determine the extent to which parents participate through DACs in decision making concerning the planning and implementation of the ESAA project. As indicated, the ESAA regulations mandate an advisory, consultative role for these committees, but such imprecise language allows for a variety of interpretations.

The DACs at 12 sites were studied. Ten of the 12 were self-contained groups whose sole purpose was to advise with respect to the ESAA project. The two remaining DACs had somewhat different configurations. At Merchant, the DAC served as both a Title I and ESAA advisory committee; the membership was synonymous but the officers changed depending on which business was being transacted. At Savin, the DAC was established to meet both state and ESAA regulations for advisory groups; representatives were elected from each of the district's three schools and met as subcommittees after the meeting of the whole. Finally, one district (Winchester) had school-level advisory committees as well as a DAC.

The following presentation will be divided into four parts, each of which addresses a different aspect of DAC operations. They are: Structure and Organization, Membership and Selection Processes, Support Features, and Functioning.

STRUCTURE AND ORGANIZATION

Table 5-1 presents site-by-site information on a number of variables which deal with the structure (e.g., size, role of subcommittees) and meeting practices (e.g., location, duration) of DACs. These variables were included either because they relate to the ESAA regulations or because there were theoretical reasons to believe that they might contribute to the functioning of the committees.

At most sites half or more of the DAC membership, at least on paper, was made up of parents, although two sites (Alpine and Willyston) reported recruiting parents only incidentally. The latter sought representation from community groups first of all and expected that some of these people would also be parents.

The noteworthy aspect of the first cluster of background variables is the fact that attendance at meetings was low. A review of the variable called "Members in Attendance" suggests that at the vast majority of sites, one-half to two-thirds of the membership did not regularly attend meetings.*

The meetings themselves, held usually once a month, tended to last from only one to one and one-half hours. Typically, an ESAA staff person, most often the Project Director, had a major hand in setting agendas and conducting meetings. These are significant activities because they potentially bestow the power to determine what issues are discussed and to shape the direction that discussions will take. At each of the eleven sites which reported having a meeting agenda, the Project Director had either established the meeting agenda on his/her own or with the assistance of the chairperson. This finding on agenda setting is consistent with the Federal Programs Survey in which we discovered that project personnel (either the Project Director or Parent Coordinator) "seem to control the agenda-setting function in a sizable fraction of ESAA districts."

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*A variety of reasons were given by parents and staff for low attendance by parents at DAC meetings. Some non-attendees were single parents who worked during the day and then had trouble finding or affording babysitters for their children in order to attend evening meetings. Other reasons mentioned for non-attendance included: lack of transportation to and from meetings, discomfort in the school, general apathy, and disenchantment with the operations of the DAC.

The data on conducting meetings is contained in the entry termed "Meeting Leadership: Nominal/Actual." We attempt to capture there the identities of both the person who opened the meetings and moved the group from agenda item to agenda item and the person who actually controlled/dominated the discussion. The latter judgment was made by Field Researchers on the basis of interviews and observations of DAC meetings. Although at all 12 sites the chairperson opened and nominally conducted the meetings, at eight of the 12 sites an ESAA staff person--most often the Project Director--was described as the individual really controlling the meeting.

The picture then that begins to develop from a close look at Table 5-1 is that of DAC meetings as short, poorly-attended get-togethers at which leadership rested in the hands of a high-status ESAA staff person. At the very least, parents did constitute the majority of membership of most DACs. In addition, at all but one site (Alpine) a parent did serve as the chairperson of the committee.

MEMBERSHIP AND SELECTION PROCESSES

Table 5-2 affords a look at the data collected on characteristics of members and the processes by which they came to serve on the DAC. The table arrays the data for parent representatives first and then moves on to civic/community group representatives.*

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*Table 5-2 does not contain data on the age, sex, ethnicity, and educational background of non-parent members. Because our focus was on parental involvement, we did not seek data on these variables for non-parent members.

Perhaps the most striking finding embedded in Table 5-2 relates directly to the element of ESAA staff control, already alluded to in Table 5-1. Right down the line, it appears as if ESAA staff (most often the Project Director) were involved in a major fashion in recruitment of DAC members. There is some evidence that word of mouth through present DAC members served occasionally as a vehicle for recruitment, but more often than not ESAA staff assumed the major role in contacting individuals and community organizations about participating on the DAC.

This developing sense of ESAA staff control of DAC operations forces one to look carefully at the extent to which DAC officers were actual employees of the project. On balance, this was not a prevalent trend. At Merchant three of the four officers were ESAA paid aides, while at Hare the vice-chairperson was the Project Coordinator and at Winchester the secretary was an aide. However, at the remaining eight sites for which we have data, no DAC officer was also an ESAA employee.

The parent membership itself tended to be female dominated. In addition, despite some obvious frustrations, which will be discussed later, parent members did seem to stay on the DACs for a while. Of those eight sites reporting data on average length of parent membership, only one (Newcastle) reported that parents served for less than two years. Bench's figures indicated an average length of one year's service for half the parent members, but the other half had served for all five years of the DAC's existence.

Finally, given the lack of specificity in the ESAA regulations about how people should be selected for DAC service, it is interesting to look at the variable labeled "Selection Process." The table demonstrates that only Savin of our 12 sites conducted a systematic election procedure to seat members on the DAC. (Savin was influenced in this regard by state legislation which required elections for advisory committee membership within its boundaries.) Bench held a pro forma vote of DAC members after candidates had already volunteered.

Based on Table 5-2, then, one might characterize the average Site Study DAC member as a middle-aged female who has volunteered or been asked by the Project Director to serve on the DAC. In addition, the emerging picture of ESAA staff control of DAC operations has been further developed by the information on the extent to which Project Directors handle recruitment of the membership.

SUPPORT FEATURES

For any political group or organization, one of the most important sets of factors in its ability to function effectively and efficiently is the support elements built into the group's operations. These elements can include systems which the group itself sets up to facilitate its operations (such as communication channels), as well as support services provided to the group by outsiders (such as training). Table 5-3 presents data on the nature of support features related to DACs at our 12 sites.

Briefly, the communication data suggest that the DACs in our study were, on the average, not communicating very much, either internally or with the external environment. Intra-DAC communications tended to be limited to mailings of minutes from the prior meeting along with notification of the upcoming meeting. Only four of the 12 sites included the agenda of the upcoming meeting in their mail-outs. Given the clear-cut difficulty sites were experiencing in getting the membership to even attend meetings, one would expect to see more efforts at personalized communication underway, similar to those at Newcastle or Willyston. At Newcastle, there were monthly telephone calls to DAC members to remind them of meeting dates and time; Willyston had established what was called the Core Group--a chain system of members calling other members who in turn call other members until the entire membership has been contacted.

DAC communication with its external environment for the purpose of getting people interested in what the DAC does was similarly limited. Indeed, our data on external communication can best be characterized by the often heard statement, "This DAC operates in isolation--nobody knows we exist." Only four sites (Merchant, Newcastle, Hare, and Savin) made any attempts to use newspapers and/or fliers to get the word out concerning up-coming DAC meetings, while only Savin launched a serious effort both before and after meetings to let people know what the DAC was doing.*

Five sites appeared to make some concerted attempts at training DAC members. However, Winchester restricted the training to officers, and Newcastle conducted what amounts to an informal, one-hour orientation. Thus, only Savin, Willyston, and Handover reported having substantial, focused sessions open to the entire membership. Of these, none dealt with specific procedural subjects such as how to set agendas, write bylaws, and run meetings.

In short, the DACs in our study manifested few of the support provisions which might serve to facilitate the participation of a group of diverse, often inexperienced individuals in the governance of complex, educational programs.

THE FUNCTIONING OF DACs

Table 5-4 displays the site-by-site data on variables related to the actual functioning of the DAC. We examined five dimensions of DACs: (1) their formalized role, (2) their participation in project decision making, (3) non-decision-making activities of the DAC, (4) the power structure within the DAC, and (5) perceptions about the overall value of the DAC.

FORMALIZED ROLE

The majority of DACs operated within the framework of a formalized role which respondents said was defined by the ESAA regulations. In other words, most of these DACs had no bylaws or statements of purpose *per se*; rather, respondents said that the DAC role was represented by the ESAA regulations. Most often this meant the ESAA regulations as interpreted by the Project Director or another ESAA staff person, since few members had ever read the regulations. The upshot of all this is that there was no clear-cut vision on the part of many members as to what the DAC should be doing. Respondents tended to talk in vague generalities about their perception of the role of the DAC, ranging from overseeing and evaluating the program as implemented (Bench) to merely supporting the project in its efforts to get funded (Ward).

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*The Project Coordinator at Savin was a skilled public relations person. In fact, she operated on a half-time basis as the public relations specialist for the district.

PROJECT DECISION MAKING

As already noted, most of the DACs in the Site Study did not take an active role in decision making concerning the project. We inquired about the DAC's participation in both planning of the project and in the implementation of the project, anticipating that the DAC's required review of the project proposal would lead it to be especially involved in the planning arena. The implementation realm was further subdivided into three focal areas of substantive interest--content of project offerings, budget, and personnel. These areas were chosen on the basis of the literature on citizen participation in educational decision making which suggests that they represent the critical decision areas within an educational network.

Table 5-4 summarizes the extent to which DACs were involved in each of the four decision areas mentioned above (i.e., proposal, content, budget, or personnel). For analytic purposes, two levels of involvement were distinguished: "Token Advisory Role" and "Real Advisory/Decision-Making Role." These categories are defined in Figure 5-1.

Proposal Decisions

In practice, all of the DACs reported reviewing proposals. However, at nine of the 12 sites these reviews might best be characterized as token in nature. That is, the review typically came at a point in time when the proposal had been fully drafted, when the critical decisions had already been made by ESAA staff writers. The DAC was expected to look quickly over the proposal and approve the provisions in it.

At the other three sites (Bench, Newcastle, and Savin), we found some evidence that the DACs were playing a more active part in the proposal efforts--having some input into decisions about what ought to be included as project plans were developed. Newcastle's DAC, for example, assisted in a needs assessment before proposal writing was initiated; at Bench the DAC had some degree of input into establishing priorities among the several ESAA components and, in the past, had had some of its members participate in actually drafting sections of the proposal.

The three more active DACs in proposal development can also be characterized by a process of review of the proposal, once drafted, that appeared to be fairly systematic in nature. First, they were provided with a substantial block of time to exercise their judgment--ten days to two weeks in the case of Bench. Second, strategies were employed to facilitate the often complex review of a major document. For example, Savin's DAC saw portions of the proposal as they were written rather than getting the entire document at one time. The Project Director at Bench (where the project was multi-faceted) made certain that DAC members were given summaries of the various components being proposed.

Finally, these three DACs made occasional suggestions and/or constructive comments which were listened to. This point is critical. Undeniably, some number of the DACs which engaged in rubber-stamping of proposals had been known to levy suggestions on ways a proposal could be improved. However, there was little evidence that their advice was considered carefully by ESAA staff and actually led to significant adaptations in the document. In contrast, at Bench, Newcastle, and Savin, it appears as if DAC recommendations led directly to at least a few identifiable changes. Within Savin, for example, DAC arguments were reportedly responsible for a movement away from an emphasis on

Token Advisory Role	This category is characterized by the project staff's prominence in decision making. The DAC has limited opportunities for involvement and typically acts as a "rubber stamp." There are two distinct variations within this category, which are: (1) DAC meetings provide a forum for presentation of project matters. However, the DAC neither questions nor contributes to project plans. (2) The DAC actively engages in discussions of project topics and questions staff plans during meetings, occasionally offering ideas of its own. Nonetheless, it is either persuaded by staff arguments or is unable to get its contributions incorporated into the project.
Real Advisory/ Decision-Making Role	The DAC gives advice that is listened to by project staff, or actually makes decisions on its own in an area. Although sites frequently said that their DAC "reviewed and approved" decisions in an area, to have been placed in this category there must have been evidence that this review frequently resulted in changes. Also, there must have been evidence of a pattern of advice taken or decisions made; it was not sufficient for there to have been but one instance when a decision was actually influenced by the DAC.

Figure 5-1. Levels of DAC Involvement in Governance

remedial reading in the following year's proposal and toward an emphasis on reading readiness and school-community relations. Within Newcastle, the DAC pressed for inclusion of ESAA school counselors in the program, reportedly refusing to sign the final proposal until the district responded to their recommendation.

Implementation Decisions

In theory, DACs could also participate in decision making surrounding the implementation of a given ESAA project. They are, for example, required to sign off on any changes in budgetary allocations which a district proposes once a project has gotten underway. But beyond this, we sought data on active DAC involvement in governance of on-going project operations, such as monitoring and evaluation of project activities or personnel. As Table 5-4 indicates, we found little such participation. Some DACs were involved in keeping informed about the on-going activities of the project, through staff reports, first-hand site visits, or both. However, the information reception rarely fed into evaluative decisions on the part of the DACs concerning content, budget, or personnel. Such non-decision activities as information reception will be discussed further in the next section.

There is at least one site at which the DAC resisted facile categorization with respect to participation in decision making. This site was Handover. During the data collection period, the DAC there assumed a posture of rubber-stamping and/or token advice with respect to project activities. However, up until 1979-80 members of the DAC had exercised a significant measure of influence on the project, ranging from participation in the development of the proposal to recommending personnel for open staff positions. The movement away from project business apparently came about because the DAC chose to devote its collective attention and energy to carving out a role for itself in a broader policy sphere.

Handover was in the process of revising its desegregation plan in response to new state statutes redefining integrated school environments. Naturally, the Board of Education in Handover was chiefly responsible for designing the revised plan. But some prominent DAC members, feeling that they had developed significant expertise and insights into what constitutes quality integrated education, spent much of the data collection period attempting to convince the Board of Education that it (the DAC) should have a prominent voice in fashioning the plan. DAC members were, it seems, successful in getting the superintendent and the Board of Education to recognize their potential contributions. A workshop was finally held between the two groups at which it was decided to set up a desegregation task force; the DAC was to have significant representation on the task force. Thus, although the DAC at Handover did not demonstrate much governance activity with respect to ESAA project matters during the Site Study, it did assert itself in the broader realm of desegregation planning for the city of Handover.

Site Study Findings on Decision Making Compared to Federal Programs Survey Findings

Our Site Study findings on DAC involvement in decision making are discrepant with the Federal Programs Survey findings in the same area. The FPS found much more decision-making activity on the part of the DACs. In fact, nearly half of all FPS districts reported that their DACs shared decision-making responsibility in areas like developing the project application, planning project components, monitoring implementation, etc. Clearly, this is a far cry from the limited involvement depicted in the Site Study, with only a third of the DACs playing a circumscribed role in governance and none jointly sharing decision-making responsibility with an LEA.

In trying to account for this disparity, it would seem reasonable to assume that the individuals responding to the FPS (in most cases the Project Directors) had a much different definition of what constitutes decision making than we did in the Site Study. They were inclined to say that parents were participating in decision making because they (parents) had to sign off on the proposal or because presentations concerning proposal components were made to them, and, in theory, they could object. The Site Study, on the other hand, was designed to look critically for evidence that a DAC was engaged in more than just token review and signing off on staff proposals or initiatives. If DAC members were genuine participants in the governance of ESAA projects, we expected to be able to find some instances when their suggestions and recommendations were clearly listened to and acted upon. Being privy to information or simply approving decisions already made by ESAA staff was not enough.

The notion that conceptual differences in the realm of decision making between Project Directors and us account for the discrepant FPS--Site Study findings is actually stronger than an assumption. Field Researchers for the Site Study interviewed many Project Directors who would in good faith label DACs as being involved in decision making, only to withdraw the label as further discussion revealed that DACs were involved in approving decisions already reached by ESAA and district personnel.

In sum, our overall Site Study data show little active DAC involvement in the governance of ESAA projects. What involvement there was tended to revolve around the project proposals--the development of them and, more importantly, the critical review of them. Four of 12 sites had DACs which could be said to be participating in governance. The other eight were at best offering limited advice to the ESAA or district professional staff.

NON-DECISION-MAKING ACTIVITIES

The paucity of DAC decision-making activity at our sites is mirrored in the area of non-decision-making activity. As already indicated, the most frequent non-decision-making activity might be termed "keeping informed about the on-going activities of the project." Every site, except Handover, reported information receipt as the primary way in which the DAC spends its time.

Overall, DACs tended to rely on ESAA staff presentations about project components for their information. Four DACs reported complementing staff presentations with first-hand visits by DAC members to view project activities. The DACs at Newcastle and Alpine even reported using forms on which members recorded their observations and opinions. However, there was no evidence that either the presentations or the site visits tied back into actual systematic evaluation which might affect the present year's components or the following year's anticipated activities. Instead, when asked about the purpose of staying informed, a few respondents made reference to being better able, as a result, to serve as a link to the community--i.e., to let school/community people know what the ESAA program is doing.

Despite the lack of evidence at our sites that field visits, as presently being carried out by DAC members, tied back into decision making, respondents from a few of the DACs not doing field visits expressed a belief that it would be valuable to get out into the field. Interestingly, DAC members at two of the four more active sites verbalized regrets at not having done more personal visitations. It is purely speculation, but it may well be that at Bench and Savin such visits could evolve into real monitoring efforts and ultimately impact project services, budget, or personnel.

POWER STRUCTURE

Within the "Structure and Organization" section, we have already presented data which indicate that at our sites an ESAA staff person(s), most often the Project Director, generally took a major leadership role in DAC meetings and in the recruitment of DAC members. We have also seen that few support elements were provided to facilitate the participation of DAC members in project governance; in particular, training for DAC members was rarely conducted.

It should come as no surprise, therefore, to see that at eight of the 12 sites the Project Director was considered to be the dominant figure in DAC operations--the person with real power. Indeed, one developed the sense at most of the sites that Project Directors exercised distinct control over the operations of the DAC. This was not necessarily insidious nor under-handed; in part, it was a natural outgrowth of the relatively high status of the Project Director in combination with his/her knowledge of the program and Federal procedures. Most parents happily deferred to this individual as the professional specialist.

At four sites, however, it is noteworthy that the chairperson was also acknowledged as a powerful, influential actor. These sites (Newcastle, Bench, Handover, and Savin) were the four DACs reporting some level of activity in project or district decision making. Their chairpeople were vigorous, assertive individuals with fairly extensive histories of participation in community/school affairs. These chairpeople guided the meetings, had some responsibility in setting up the agenda, and maintained close contact with the ESAA staff person associated with the DAC. In members' minds, and in their own minds, they were all perceived as influential individuals.

VALUE OF DAC

Responses to questions about the perceived value of DAC are summarized in the last row of Table 5-4. These data complete a portrait of DACs begun in Table 5-1. The elements of the portrait have been quite consistent, one with another. So it seems with our information on "value." Organizations whose reasons for existence are unclear in many members' minds and whose actual activities have tended to take on a ceremonial shade are generally not highly valued. DACs at eight of our 12 sites (the eight less active sites) were not perceived as valuable organizations according to Table 5-4. Even Project Directors, when queried, seemed hard pressed to point to much of significance accomplished by these DACs. (At Alpine and Chesterfield, the Project Directors did believe that the site visits performed by some DAC members were important.)

Conversely, at Handover, Bench, Savin, and Newcastle, respondents seemed to share a feeling that the DAC was a valuable group--serving as a vehicle through which parents and others could have some meaningful input into the project and/or into the desegregation process. Savin respondents also mentioned the public relations value of the DAC, since at Savin, members talked a good deal with friends and neighbors about what was going on within ESAA.

III. DISCUSSION: CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES

This section will attempt to account for the major findings, as presented in this chapter, concerning parental participation in governance through DACs. More particularly, we will use our data to answer two questions which the major findings raise. Why, overall, were the DACs playing such a negligible role in project/district governance? Why were DACs at four sites (Savin, Bench, Newcastle, and Handover) relatively more active in the governance realm than the others?

Anticipating the importance of being able to account for major findings, we collected site-level data on factors that tended to enhance or detract from program-related parental involvement in governance. An effort has been made in the analysis of these data to discern *patterns* of contributory factors--that is, factors or clusters of factors which appear at several sites, producing similar positive or negative impacts.

In addition, information on the outcomes, both personal and institutional, which resulted from parental participation on Site Study DACs is reported in this section. As with contributory factors, the emphasis in analyzing the outcome data was placed on discovering patterns of consequences.

WHY WERE DACs PLAYING A NEGLIGIBLE ROLE IN PROJECT GOVERNANCE?

In seeking an explanation for the low levels of participation in governance which prevailed at our sites, one is confronted with a number of site-specific influences which don't generalize to other sites. Thus, it becomes far easier to account for the low level of DAC activity within any given site than it is to account for the low level of governance activities at the 12 sites taken together. Nonetheless, one factor, emerging from our information on contributory factors, can be linked to the lack of decision-making responsibility on the part of Site Study DACs.

DAC ROLE AS DETERMINED BY KEY ESAA STAFF

As has been demonstrated, every DAC in this study had an influential ESAA staff person (almost always the Project Director) associated with it. In point of fact, the relationship in all cases was stronger than an "association." The Project Director (or in the case of Bench, his ESAA designee) was the key actor in the DAC. He/she usually recruited members, set meeting agendas, organized ESAA staff presentations to the DAC and/or site visitations, did most of the talking at meetings, interpreted ESAA regulations and procedures to DAC members, determined how long the DAC would have for proposal review and comments, etc.

It was certainly predictable that at all 12 sites, respondents identified the Project Director as the most powerful person on the DAC. Further, it is probably not stretching a point to say that the DACs in this study could have taken shape in any way the Project Directors desired. If they had conceived of a DAC and its parents as a group which should participate in a major fashion in project decision making, then in all probability we would have found DACs which were making project decisions.

Instead, the Project Directors in the Site Study favored a strictly advisory role for DACs. Naturally, there were differences in interpretation of what "advisory" meant in operation. This, in part, accounts for why four of our sites were somewhat more active in project decision areas. However, no DAC of the 12 could reasonably be called a policy-making or decision-making group. Nor could any of these DACs be characterized as jointly sharing decision-making responsibility with the LEA in any realm--a response category frequently checked in our Federal Programs Survey work on DACs.

Thus, the presumptive evidence is strong that, given the extraordinary influence of the Project Directors in DAC operations, their positions of authority in project operations, and their administrative status in the district at large, DACs were not more involved in decision-making activities because Project Directors didn't wish them to be.

We hasten to add that we are not asserting that Project Directors felt that DACs should not be involved in decision making because they were malevolent or domineering people. On the contrary, our data indicate that they were largely concerned, hard-working individuals who tried to keep DAC members informed about ESAA happenings and were well regarded by the membership. Unfortunately, our site information does not permit a systematic analysis of the reasons for Project Directors' lack of support for an ongoing decision-making role for DACs. However, we can offer some possible explanations based on insights from the data.

Probable Reasons For Project Directors' Beliefs About DAC Role

At approximately half of the sites, respondents (including, in all instances, the Project Director) mentioned that one of the reasons parents don't take an active role in project governance is that the ESAA regulations don't require such a role; the regulations allude only to a consultative function. When one reads the regulations, it becomes apparent that there really is no mandate therein for a parental decision-making body. Thus, for those districts and Project Directors who believe in strictly following Federal guidelines and regulations, there is no incentive within the ESAA rules to fashion a "governing" committee.

In addition, respondents at a number of sites shared a common belief that, simply stated, education should be the province of educators. To put it another way, many parents and most school professionals at our sites tended to believe that major educational decisions should reside in the hands of the professionals because they have the appropriate knowledge and expertise. This pervasive attitude may have operated interactively with the disincentive in the ESAA regulations to lead Project Directors away from actively promoting a governance role for DACs.

Finally, the governance activities of DACs were naturally constrained by the district contexts within which they operated. To be more precise, every district had a set of procedures and policies in place for making most decisions about curriculum, budget, and personnel. This policy-making apparatus typically left few decision-making voids in a district, and consequently served to limit severely the opportunities for DAC involvement in project decisions. For example, most budgetary determinations were made by a professional district employee (e.g., a director of Federal funds procurement, an assistant superintendent for business affairs) in cooperation with a board of education. Thus, a major advisory/decision-making role for DACs in the budgetary realm would have often necessitated the transference of an existing decision prerogative from high-level, district finance officers to DACs. Since ESAA Project Directors are, after all is said and done, district employees themselves, it is unreasonable to expect that they would advocate such transferences of influence without compelling incentives to do so, such as unequivocal requlatory language or organized parental insistence on a greater role in curriculum, personnel, and budgetary matters. As we have seen, such incentives did not exist at the sites in the Site Study.

WHY WERE SOME DACs RELATIVELY MORE ACTIVE THAN OTHERS?

Although none of the Site Study DACs qualified as a decision-making group, four of the 12 did, as has been indicated, levy advice and suggestions which were heeded by project staff and led to occasional changes. To reiterate, they seem to have been genuine participants in the decision-making process, although not decision makers. What is different about these DACs compared to the other eight which operated in a token advisory capacity? What elements appear to have marginally enhanced the extent to which the DACs at Bench, Handover, Newcastle, and Savin were involved in governance? The answer to these questions seems to lie with two discriminant factors yielded by our data. The two are discussed below.

THE ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIORS OF PROJECT DIRECTORS

Ironically, the first major discriminant factor supported by the data is a direct offshoot of the factor already discussed as accounting for the generally low level of governance activity. In other words, it appears again that the attitudes and behaviors of key ESAA staff (most prominently, the Project Directors) with respect to establishing a role for the DAC makes a significant difference in determining level of activity. As reported in the last section, in absolute terms, no Project Directors fashioned a full-fledged decision-making role for a DAC. However, some were relatively more enthusiastic than others about the potential contributions of parents to the development and implementation of project activities. In particular, the four at the more active sites shared a belief that the grass-roots perspective of parents was valuable when it came to making determinations about what services ESAA ought to be providing in a district or school. They seemed to welcome the opportunity to share their ideas and strategies with parents and to have parents, in turn, offer their own suggestions and criticisms. Above all, they were reported to be good listeners who were honestly respectful of parents.

This sense of respect manifested itself in a variety of ways. Although these Project Directors (or the DAC Coordinator at Bench) were key participants at DAC meetings, they did not run and control the meetings, as did the Project Directors at the other eight sites. In addition, the four initiated certain measures to facilitate parental involvement on the DAC. As already noted, for example, at Bench, project summaries were provided to assist DAC members in their review of the proposal. At Newcastle, questionnaires served as the organizers for site visits to monitor program activities. Such support efforts reflected an appreciation by Project Directors that reading a Federal program proposal or evaluating an educational environment can be an enormously complex task for anyone; and, if meaningful parental input is truly desired, then active steps have to be taken to assist parents.

In addition, there is reason to believe that the sense of supportiveness manifested by these four Project Directors extended to the chairpeople of their respective DACs, aiding them (the chairpeople) in becoming influential partners in DAC operations. Recall that the "powerful persons" variable in Table 5-4 indicated that the parents serving as chairpeople at Savin, Bench, Newcastle, and Handover were all recognized as being prominent individuals in the power structure of their DACs, along with the Project Directors. Our data do not permit a conclusion that the existence of influential chairpeople was "caused" by the attitudes and behaviors of supportive Project Directors. However, since we examined a number of sites where non-supportive Project Directors were associated with vigorous, assertive chairpeople who could not exert any influence in the operation of their DACs, we have some presumptive evidence that a causal relationship may obtain.

TRAINING FOR DAC MEMBERS

The other major distinguishing feature at sites having DACs classified as more active was the existence of training for members. The one exception was Bench, but there the Project Director and DAC Coordinator came to the conclusion that training was unnecessary because most of the active members were old hands, having served for a number of years on the committee. Savin, Handover, and Newcastle had all instituted training efforts. Each was a little different but a common theme was an explanation of how and why ESAA is funded and a description of the way in which the project was intended to work.

Among the low activity sites, only Willyston and Winchester developed anything approximating training, and Winchester's workshop was offered only to DAC officers. Thus, Willyston was the only low-active site which had a concentrated training package for DAC members.

Why should training or the lack thereof be such an important contributory factor, especially when no site was conducting in-depth, procedural training efforts on how to run meetings or how to problem solve? The answer would seem to lie with an attitudinal factor already discussed. Our data suggest strongly that both professionals and parents tended to believe that parents did not have the knowledge or expertise to make important decisions about educational services. One reasonable way to lessen this alleged deficiency is to institute training services for parents, to enable them to at least participate in the process. Yet, few of the 12 sites had done so, and fewer still had committed themselves to intensive training efforts.

OUTCOMES OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT OF DACs

During the course of the Site Study, we gathered data on the impact of parental involvement on: (1) the behavior and attitudes of persons touched by parental involvement, including the participants themselves; and (2) educational processes and institutional arrangements. The latter area was divided into eight sub-areas, including project design/implementation, administrative practices, curricular content, etc. It should be noted that the data discussed here are not systematic in nature; participants were asked to share their impressions about the effects that parental involvement had had on the project and on individuals.

In general, very few outcomes were reported to be associated with parental participation on ESAA DACs. Outcome information becomes even thinner when one looks for patterns in the data--i.e., impacts which were replicated in a substantial number of sites. The dearth of major findings in the outcome domain is, however, consistent with the lack of activity on the part of the majority of DACs in the Site Study.

The feeling was expressed by parents at six of the 12 sites that serving on the DAC had made them more knowledgeable about the workings of the school system and better able to deal with that system. These projects asserted that their DAC experiences had made them more sophisticated about how decisions are made, how problems are faced, and how one needs to "read between the lines." Level of activity of the DAC seemed to be unrelated to this expressed outcome, since three of the sites so reporting were low-activity sites and three were relatively high-activity sites.

Within the educational/institutional realm, patterns of outcomes related to parental involvement on the DAC were largely confined to the high activity sites. At three of the four sites where DACs did actively make recommmendations, there was evidence that some aspect of project design had been affected in the last few years. Outcomes ranged from a project emphasis on readiness activities for youngsters in Savin to increased supervision of

ESAA teachers in Newcastle. And at the fourth high-active site (Handover), the influence of the DAC was being manifested in the broader sphere of district-wide desegregation planning.

The one exception to this pattern of identifiable educational-institutional outcomes being traceable to high-activity sites rests with Hare. DAC members there were said to have become so concerned about the small number of community coordinators within the district that they made a strong, and ultimately successful, recommendation to the ESAA administration to increase the number of coordinators from two per district to one per school building.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

Having investigated both the nature and level of parental involvement in governance through DAC's, we have reached some conclusions about steps that could be taken to upgrade such participation. The following section presents the most significant of these conclusions. The section is intended to be conditional in tone; underlying each suggestion is the implied statement, "If increased parental participation in project governance is desired by the Federal program office and/or local practitioners, then here is something that could be done."

The conclusions to be discussed grow directly out of strategies which have been successful at one or more of our sites. But the approach in this report is purposefully systematic, not piecemeal. In other words, we have tried to synthesize individual practices into a coherent, holistic approach with the ultimate goal being the enhancement of parental participation in the governance of ESAA projects. Further, we have steered away from suggestions that cannot be realistically operationalized. For example, the attitudes and views of Project Directors have been identified as a critical contributory factor to DAC operations. However, statements to the effect that the individual attitudinal sets of Project Directors need to be changed for DACs to participate meaningfully in governance are not productive; appropriate action steps are not provided. We concentrate instead on concrete actions that can be taken on the part of the Federal program office and/or local practitioners to enhance parental involvement.

First and foremost, the DACs in the Site Study typically suffered from a lack of interest on the part of parents. On the one hand, few members attended meetings regularly; on the other hand, DACs essentially operated in isolation--no one knew much about their existence or activities. The fact that few members attended regularly is far less critical in terms of participation in governance than is the anonymity of DACs among parents. This is because our data provided striking examples of DACs, such as the one at Bench, in which a small core group of parents became the DAC and carved out a role, albeit small, for themselves in governance. Anonymity, though, is another matter.

In order to make a plausible argument that a group like a DAC ought to be given a chance to participate in decision making, one must be able to, at least, assert that the members represent some set of constituents--that by bringing a handful of parent representatives into the decision-making process, the ESAA Project Director is essentially opening up the process to parents at large. However, when parent representatives are not elected (as was the case at a vast majority of our sites) and then go on to operate in virtual isolation from their presumed constituency, it becomes difficult to make any assertions about representative democracy.

Thus, to get more parents interested and knowledgeable about the operations of the DAC, we suggest as a first step more extensive communication with the school/community environment. Publicizing DAC meetings and the prospective agendas in advance is one aspect of this. But even more important is communication to the public after DAC meetings about what has transpired. The ESAA staff at Savin, who attended carefully to positive public relations, provided reports to the local media about DAC business meetings, also indicating what members were in attendance. Another mechanism for getting people out to DAC meetings (thereby stirring up some awareness of the DAC as an entity) would be to occasionally surround a DAC meeting with attractive social events. For example, an ESAA human relations assembly, at which some youngsters perform, might be conducted before a regularly scheduled DAC meeting. Or a workshop on parenting skills might be held as an offshoot of a DAC meeting.

Improving the visibility of a DAC is a step in the right direction. But grabbing the attention of parent members and constituents is easier than sustaining that interest. Parents are not likely to be enthused by involvement on a committee which operates without a clear-cut purpose, offering infrequent reactions to professional staff proposals and initiatives--reactions which rarely lead to any action. Some real role definition seems in order. And because attention is generally paid to the Federal regulations, this might be an effective place to start.

If the ESAA program office desires a measure of parent participation in ESAA governance, then this should be stated clearly and straightforwardly in the regulations. Terms like "advise" and "consult with," which presently make up the description of the intended role of the DAC, leave too much room for variable interpretation. Indeed, we have scrupulously avoided labeling any of our site DACs as "out of compliance" with Federal regulations, because it is apparent that, except for composition requirements, the regulations lend themselves to varying interpretations and subsequent activities.

A clear role definition will serve to explain to both Project Directors and parents what it is that DACs should be doing. An alternative to leaving this definition up to the Federal government would be to build it into the application process. That is, LEAs might be required to specify in their project applications a role for DACs in the development and implementation of projects. The term "specify" is purposeful; the application would not merely provide assurances that the DAC would be brought into the development and implementation processes as is presently required, but would delineate specific duties for the DAC.

Once a clearer purpose has been defined for DACs, a number of measures can be taken to support members in fulfilling their responsibilities. First, intensive training should be provided. Sessions could profitably be built around such topics as: (1) providing a background and history of the ESAA project and a description of the present purposes/intentions of the program; (2) developing a familiarity with the legislation and regulations of the program; (3) exploring techniques for conducting efficient, problem-solving meetings; (4) discussing approaches to critically reading and evaluating a technical proposal; and (5) learning what to look for in observing an educational environment. Without training in these areas, it should not be surprising that, on the whole, parental involvement in such complex tasks as reviewing and commenting on a technical proposal devolves into a ritual exercise--an exercise filled with frustration for anyone taking it seriously.

Secondly, many DACs might find it worthwhile to formalize a role similar to that of DAC Coordinator at Bench. This is a person whose designated job is to facilitate and support the activities of the DAC. More specifically, the job could entail: generating promotional activities and informational outlets so that parents could find out about the DAC; working to define useful tasks, duties, and timetables for the DAC; developing and implementing strategies for training DAC members in appropriate areas; acting as a continued resource for DAC members with problems and/or questions about the project. Indeed, an ESAA staff person devoting concentrated blocks of time to helping the DAC realize a meaningful role in project governance could be an invaluable resource.

The DAC being advocated here would be a highly visible group of knowledgeable parents who possess a strong sense of what they ought to be doing as DAC members. These parents would be able to turn to a DAC Coordinator to satisfy their information needs and to mesh their activities with those of the ESAA staff. One could then imagine as a corollary a general tightening up of the procedural aspects of DAC operations. For example, DACs would undoubtedly insist on contact with proposals in time to conduct a reasonable review. Similarly, DACs might decide to impose attendance rules on the membership--much like those in effect in Savin--which specify that non-attendance at three meetings in a row constitutes grounds for dismissal.

Finally, a concerted attempt to upgrade the governance activities of parents through involvement on DACs needs to be accompanied by some sort of network for communication across ESAA programs on a nationwide basis. We come away from the Site Study with the distinct impression that both parents and local ESAA staffers suffer in large measure from a shortsightedness concerning the potential contributions of parents to the ESAA program. They tend not to be aware of the possibilities in an area like participation in governance, because their fields of vision are confined to their own district or to contiguous districts. Thus, these practitioners operate in an informational vacuum of sorts, employing their intuitions and instincts in a trial and error fashion.

There are a number of conceivable approaches to cross-fertilization of ideas and/or successful strategies. Alternatives include: national/regional conferences and workshops, regional/state assistance centers, and handbooks built around successful strategies. Whatever the mechanism, the purpose would presumably be the same--to disseminate information about the activities and operations of effective DACs, so that parents and local ESAA staff are not left entirely to their own devices in developing a meaningful role for their DACs.

	MERCHANT	CHESTER-FIELD	SAVIN	HANDOVER	ALPINE	HARRISON	BENCH	WARD	NEWCASTLE	WILLYSTON	HARE	WINCHESTER
YEARS IN EXISTENCE	5	3.5	7	3.5	5	8	5	4	2	8	5	7
SIZE (ADULTS ONLY)	24	19	28	17	12	12	24	18	15	18	20	33
MEETING FREQUENCY	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Once every two months	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly
MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE	8 (33%)	9 (37.5%)	14-20 (50-70%)	5 (29%)	12-15 (50-60%)	4 (33%)	12 (50%)	2 (9%)	6-7 (40-50%)	8 (44%)	15 (75%)	4 (12%)
NON-MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE*	20 (mostly ESAA staff)	0	5-6 (Board members, principals)	0	0	0	10-15 (mostly ESAA staff)	0	0	0	0	10
ROLE OF SUBCOMMITTEES	No Subcomms.	No Subcomms. presently	No Subcomms.	No Subcomms. presently	No Subcomms.	No Subcomms.	Not important	No Subcomms.	No Subcomms. presently	No Subcomms.	No Subcomms.	No Subcomms.
MEETING TIME	Morning	Afternoon	Evening	Evening	Morning	Afternoon	Evening	Evening	Evening	Evening	Evening	Evening
MEETING LOCATION	School	Various schools	School	Board of Education	School	Community facility	Board of Education	Project office	District offices	Board of Education	School	Project office
MEETING DURATION	1 hr.	1-1.5 hrs.	2 hrs.	1 hr.	2-2.5 hrs.	1 hr. or less	1-1.5 hrs.	2 hrs.	1-1.5 hrs.	1.5 hrs.	1 hr.	1 hr.
AGENDA SETTING	PD + Chair	PD + Chair	Superintendent + Chair	PD + Chair	PD	PD	DAC Coord.	No agenda setting	PD	PD	PD	PD + Chair
MEETING LEADERSHIP: NOMINAL/ACTUAL	Chair/PD	Chair/PD	Chair/ Superintendent	Chair/ PD + Chair	Chair/PD	PD/PD	Chair/DAC Coord.	PD/PD	Chair/PD	Chair/PD	Chair/PD	Chair/PD
MINUTES: RECORDER/ DISTRIBUTION	Parent/Not distributed	Parent/ All members	PD/ All members	Parent/ All members	PD/ All members attending	Parent/ All members	Parent/ All members	Not kept	PD/ All members	Proj. Secty/ All members	Non-parent/ All members	Parent/ All members

*Excluding project director or project coordinator

LEGEND:

PERSONNEL

PD = Project Director
Chair = DAC Chairperson
DAC Coord. = District-wide Advisory Committee Coordinator

Table 5-1. DAC Structure and Organization

		MERCHANT	CHESTERFIELD	SAVIN	HANDOVER	ALPINE	HARRISON	BENCH	WARD	NEWCASTLE	WILLYSTON	HARE	WINCHESTER
PARENT MEMBERS	% OF TOTAL MEMBERSHIP	83%	47%	96%	88%	58%	50%	50%	72%	40%	72%	60%	48%
	AGE: 20-30 30-40 40-50 50+	15% 10% 35% 40%	0 33% 67% 0	18% 30% 33% 18%	No data	0 57% 43% 0	0 50% 50% 0	0 50% 50% 0	No data	67% 33% 0 0	0 72% 23% 0	All in 25-50 range	7% 36% 36% 21%
	SEX: % FEMALE	85%	67%	59%	53%	57%	83%	58%	85%	100%	77%	87%	81%
	ETHNICITY	B: 55% W: 45%	B: 44% W: 56%	B: 59% W: 41%	B: 53% W: 29% H: 18%	B: 43% W: 14% H: 43%	B: 83% W: 17%	B: 25% W: 25% H: 25% A: 25%	B: 38% W: 31% H: 31%	B: 17% W: 50% H: 33%	B: 46% W: 54%	No data	B: 19% W: 19% H: 25% A: 37%
	EDUCATION	<HS: 0 HS: 80% C: 20%	<HS: 0 HS: 44% C: 22% Unknown: 33%	<HS: 0 HS: 74% C: 26%	All HS or more	No data	No data	<HS: 17% HS: 50% C: 33%	No data	<HS: 0 HS: 100% C: 0	<HS: 0 HS: 8% C: 92%	<HS: 7% HS: 93% C: 0	<HS: 0 HS: 18% C: 50% Unknown: 32%
	RECRUITMENT	PD invites Word of mouth from members	PD invites Chair contacts occasionally	PD invites Word of mouth from members	PD invites Chair contacts ocassionally	PD invites	PD invites Word of mouth from members	DAC Coord contacts Word of mouth from members	PD invites Word of mouth from members occasionally	PD notifies Area Superintendent	No data	PC invites ESAA staff contact at PE meeting	No data
	SELECTION PROCESS	Volunteer	Volunteer	Elected by parents at individual schools	Volunteer	Volunteer	Volunteer, then *pro forma* election	Volunteer	Volunteer	Volunteer, then appointed by PD	Volunteer	Volunteer	Appointed by school committees
	AVERAGE LENGTH ON DAC	2-3 yrs.	2 yrs.	2 yrs.	2 yrs.	2 yrs.	3 yrs.	1/2 for 5 yrs. 1/2 for 1 yr.	2 yrs.	1 yr.	3 yrs.	No data	No data
	BACKGROUND/EXPERIENCE OF CHAIRPERSON	4 yrs. as Chair; ESAA aide	Former reading tchr.; Church; Chair. of Civic Club	Church; Active in NAACP	No data	2 yrs. as rep. of Adult Educ. Council	PTA; Board member of independent school	NAACP; Civil Rights Commission	PTA; League of Women Voters	Civic group; Social service foundation	Adv. Comm. for TV station; YMCA planning comm.	PTA Pres.	PTA Pres.; Tennants Comm. Pres.; Dept. of Agric. adv. comm.
	EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF OFFICERS IN PROJECT	3 of 4 are ESAA aides	None	None	None	None	None	None	None	None	No data	Vice-Chair. is PD	Sec. is ESAA aide
SCHOOL/COMMUNITY GROUPS	GROUPS REPRESENTED	ESAA tchrs.; Catholic schools; Students	Teachers; Service; Community action	Teachers; Students	Community action	Teachers; Community action	Teachers; Community action; Service	Teachers; Community action; Service; Court-ordered adv. comm.	Teachers	Community action; Service	Teachers; Service; Community action; Administration	Teachers; Church; Community action	Teachers; Church, Community action
	RECRUITMENT	PD contacts	PD contacts	PD contacts	PD and sometimes Chair contact	PD contacts	No data	DAC Coord. contacts, sometimes members get own replac.	PD contacts	School Board invites	No data	PC contacts	No data
	SELECTION PROCESS	Appt. by group	Appt. by group	Elected at school level	Appt. by group	Appt. by group	Appt. by group	Appt. by group	Appt. by group	Appt. by group	Appt. by group	Appt. by group	No data
	AVERAGE LENGTH ON DAC	2 yrs.	1.5 yrs.	2 yrs.	No data	No data	1 yr.	2 yrs.	2 yrs.	5 yrs.	3 yrs.	No data	No data

LEGEND:

ETHNICITY
A = Asian
B = Black
H = Hispanic
W = White

EDUCATION
<HS = less than high school
HS = high school graduate
C = some college

STAFF
PD = Project Director
Tchr = Teacher
DAC Coord = District-wide Advisory Committee Coordinator
PC = Project Coordinator

GROUPS
Service = League of Women Voters, Red Cross, etc.
Community Action = La Raza, NAACP, etc.

RECRUITMENT
PE = Parent education

Table 5-2. DAC Membership and Selection

		MERCHANT	CHESTER-FIELD	SAVIN	HANDOVER	ALPINE	HARRISON	BENCH	WARD	NEWCASTLE	WILLYSTON	HARE	WINCHESTER
INTRA-DAC COMMUNICATIONS		Notices of meetings/ agenda Phone calls at times	Notices of meetings/ Minutes	Notices of meetings/ agenda Extensive informal discussion among members Minutes	Minutes At times, notices of important meetings	Minutes	Minutes	Notices of meetings/ agenda Phone net work with DAC Coord. at center Minutes	Notices of meetings	Minutes and memos Phone calls to remind members of meetings	Minutes/agenda Memos from PD Phone chain system	Only at meetings	Only at meetings
DAC COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS, SCHOOLS, COMMUNITY		Occasional newspaper articles Fliers announcing meetings	Short questionnaire on public reaction to one ESAA component	Announcement of meetings through fliers and media Also media reports after meetings	None reported	PD sends minutes to community organizations	None reported	Occasional reports in district newsletter	None reported	District newsletter includes DAC announcements Members from community groups report to them	None reported	Announcements of meetings through fliers and media Letters to previous attendees	Announcements of meetings/ Minutes sent to all schools
DAC TRAINING	**NO. OF SESSIONS**	1	None	2	1-last yr.	None	None	None	None	1 - others as needed	2 in one week-end period	None	1
	ATTENDEES	DAC Officers	–	10-12 members	Most members and others interested	–	–	–	–	Most new members	Most new members	–	DAC Officers
	WHO CONDUCTED	PD	–	PD ESAA Reading Supervisor	Outside consultants	–	–	–	–	PD	PD Experienced member State University	–	PD
	TOPICS	Intro to DAC	–	ESAA overview and background of local project	Issues in desegregation	–	–	–	–	ESAA overview and background of local project	Intro to regs./ legis. Issues in desegregation Role of DAC	–	ESAA overview Role of DAC
OTHER PROGRAMMATIC SUPPORT		None reported	Copies of proposal Other documents Clerical Travel reimbursement	None reported	Clerical	Copies of regs. Clerical	Clerical Travel reimbursement	Copies of regs. Project summaries Evaluation reports Other documents Travel reimbursement	None reported	Copies of regs. Evaluation reports Other documents Travel reimbursement	Copies of regs. Evaluation reports District handbooks	Copies of regs. Clerical	Copies of regs. Evaluation reports Other documents Travel reimbursement

LEGEND:

PD = Project Director

Table 5-3. DAC Support Features

	MERCHANT	CHESTER-FIELD	SAVIN	HANDOVER	ALPINE	HARRISON	BENCH	WARD	NEWCASTLE	WILLYSTON	HARE	WINCHESTER
DECISION AREAS CONSIDERED BY DAC	Proposal	Proposal	Proposal	Proposal District desegregation plan	Proposal	Proposal	Proposal Classroom content/ student services	Proposal	Proposal Classroom content/student services	Proposal	Proposal	Proposal
LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT	Token	Token	Advise/Decide	Token Advise/Decide	Token	Token	Advise/Decide	Token	Advise/Decide	Token	Token	Token
FORMALIZED DAC ROLE/SOURCE	Advise/Regs. as interpreted by PD	Advise/Regs. as interpreted by PD & Director of Federal Funds	Advise, link to Community/ Regs. & State Finance Act guidelines	Advise/Regs. as interpreted by PD	Advise, link to community/ Proposal	Advise/Regs. as interpreted by PD	Advise, act in watchdog capacity/ Bylaws	Advise/Regs. as interpreted by PD	Advise, link to community/ Proposal	Advise/ Bylaws	Advise, link to community/ Bylaws	Advise, link to community/ Proposal
POWERFUL PERSONS	PD	PD	PD Chair	PD Chair	PD	PD	DAC Coord Chair	PD	PD Chair	PD	PD	PD
REACTION TO POWER STRUCTURE	Accepted	Accepted	Accepted	No data	Accepted by membership but not by chair	Chair dissatisfied	Accepted	Accepted by membership but not by chair	Accepted	Accepted	Not accepted	No data
NON-DECISION DAC ACTIVITIES	Receive info through staff presentations	Receive info through presentations and observations	Receive info through staff presentations	Receive info through staff presentations	Receive info through staff presentations, observations and student reports	Received limited info from PD	Receive info through staff presentations	Receive limited info from PD	Receive info through presentations and observations	Receive info through staff and other group presentations	Receive info through staff presentations	Receive info through presentations and observations
PERCEIVED VALUE OF DAC	None cited	Observations somewhat valuable Otherwise none cited	Positive in public relations sense	Increasing influence district-wide	None cited	None cited	Positive in establishing priorities, providing oversight	None cited	Positive in providing oversight	None cited	None cited	None cited

LEGEND:

POWERFUL PERSONS

PD = Project Director
Chair = DAC Chairperson
DAC Coord = District-wide Advisory Committee Coordinator

Table 5-4. DAC Functioning

CHAPTER 6
PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN THE ESAA INSTRUCTIONAL PROCESS

I. INTRODUCTION

This chapter will focus on the extent to which parents were involved in the ESAA instructional process at sites in the Site Study. We investigated parental participation in activities related to the instructional process because of the potential importance of such participation. Undeniably, the educational lives of youngsters center on instruction in various subject matter areas. Therefore, the closer parents come to the point of delivery of instructional services, the more likely that they will be able to have a direct impact on the educational lives of students.

Participating parents can conceivably exercise an influence on instructional activities in several ways. For example, by increasing the number of adults in a school environment, they can contribute to the provision of individualized instruction; or parents can inject renewed life into educational offerings because of certain insights or sensitivities developed as significant members of the served community. Further, there are a series of potential consequences of parental participation in the instructional process which relate less directly to students but are nonetheless important. For example, the greater the amount of first-hand knowledge parents tend to have about the instructional services provided to youngsters by the ESAA program, the greater the chances that parents will be able to play a meaningful role in decisions related to school or classroom educational offerings.

During the Site Study, we took as broad a look as possible at parental involvement in the ESAA instructional domain. First, we did not confine our investigation to parents operating in actual teaching or tutorial capacities; the Study also examined parents performing instructional support tasks, such as clerical duties and scoring of tests. Second, given the special ESAA thrust in the areas of human relations and cross-cultural understanding (a thrust which is likely to increase in the near future), we sought information on parental involvement in instruction related to these areas, as well as information on involvement in basic skills instruction. In other words, Field Researchers consciously collected data on parents applying their special skills and knowledge to such efforts as social studies lessons and human relations units, as well as to remedial work in reading and math.

Finally, three mechanisms by which parents might participate in the ESAA instructional process were investigated: as paid paraprofessionals (paid aides), as instructional volunteers, and as teachers of their own children at home (home tutors). These three avenues for potential participation were suggested by the literature on parental involvement as well as by our own contacts with prominent individuals in the field. For each site, we concentrated our efforts on determining whether or not and in what ways parents were involved in such activities; moreover, we tried to determine whether this involvement was mere happenstance or the effect of actual attempts to promote parent participation.

In practice, only one of 12 study sites had an ESAA-sponsored home tutoring program in operation and none had an active volunteer component. Therefore, the emphasis in this chapter will be primarily on parents operating as ESAA-paid paraprofessionals.

PLAN FOR THE CHAPTER

The chapter will consist of five separate parts. The remainder of Part I contains an introduction to the regulatory requirements addressing parental participation in the instructional process and an overview of the Study's key findings regarding the actual role of parents in instruction. Parts II, III, and IV discuss the major findings for each of the three areas (paid paraprofessionals, volunteers, home tutoring) respectively and present data on the potential causes and reported consequences of parental involvement in these areas. As will be the convention throughout this report, we will not discuss in the text all aspects of the data collected. Instead, we will focus on the major findings which emerge across sites, occasionally exploring in depth a promising site-specific situation. Data tables will be used to summarize in greater detail the specific data for each site.

Finally, in Part V we will offer some suggestions, based on our Site Study data, to national and local policy makers who may be interested in increasing parental involvement in the ESAA instructional process.

ESAA REGULATIONS RELATED TO PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN THE INSTRUCTIONAL PROCESS

The ESAA regulations in place at the time of the Site Study had very little to say about parental involvement in the instructional process. In fact, two of the components examined in the Site Study--volunteers and home tutoring--were not mentioned at all in the regulations. With respect to paid paraprofessionals, there was no requirement per se that parents be employed in these

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positions, but in the event that an LEA proposed to use paid paraprofessionals in its ESAA program, the regulations stipulated that the LEA must "include an assurance that...preference in recruiting and hiring teacher aides shall be given to parents of children attending schools assisted under the Act." As a result of this mandate for paid paraprofessionals, one section of Part II is devoted to an analysis of the intentionality on the part of Site Study districts and program staff to specifically recruit parents for available aide positions.

SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS

PAID PARAPROFESSIONAL COMPONENT - Four major findings emerged from analyses of data on the role of parents in paid paraprofessional positions.

1. Five of the 12 ESAA sites studied were found to have parents acting as aides.

2. Despite regulations that call for assurances that parents should be given preference in the recruitment and hiring of teacher aides, the data indicated that few conscious attempts were made by LEAs to hire parents. Nonetheless, many parents were recruited because district procedures typically gave school principals a major hand in recruitment and hiring.

3. No distinctions were made between parent and non-parent aides in terms of their duties, training, or evaluations.

4. In general, paid aides had little or no input into decisions regarding the design or implementation of the paid paraprofessional component, nor into decisions involving classroom methods and materials. At only two sites were aides given definite decision-making opportunities with respect to classroom activities. Decision-making opportunities at these sites seemed to be related to the provision of training workshops.

VOLUNTEER COMPONENT - For the section addressing parents serving as ESAA instructional volunteers, one key finding surfaced:

- None of the 12 sites had an ESAA-sponsored volunteer component in operation. Therefore, neither parents nor non-parents were found functioning in that role.

HOME TUTORING COMPONENT - For the section addressing ESAA parents serving as teachers of their own children at home, one key finding emerged:

- The vast majority of sites sampled placed no emphasis on utilizing parents as teachers of their own children.*

Each of these findings will be more fully discussed, along with relevant supporting data, in the sections that follow.

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*It should be noted that the one site which did make use of home tutors provided some valuable insights and is therefore discussed fairly extensively in Part IV of the Chapter.

II. SITE STUDY FINDINGS: PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AS PAID PARAPROFESSIONALS

As already noted, parents serving as paid paraprofessionals (teacher aides) is the only mechanism for parental participation in the instructional process that is referred to in the ESAA regulations. In addition, roles as paid paraprofessionals provide parents a genuine means for gaining access to classrooms to obtain firsthand knowledge about what is going on and a means for providing direct input into the program. Therefore, paid parent professionals (PPPs) became a focal point for data collection in the instructional realm. For the purposes of the Site Study, paid paraprofessionals were defined as individuals who directly assist teachers in the performance of educational or other professional duties, within the context of the ESAA project.

We gathered extensive descriptive information on: the extent to which LEAs and local ESAA projects gave preference in their selection processes to recruiting and hiring parents for paid paraprofessional positions; the characteristics of both parents and non-parents who assume aide positions; the overall structure and organization of paid paraprofessional components; and elements of educational environments which might increase parents' abilities to serve meaningfully as paid paraprofessionals--e.g., programmatic support and the personal supportiveness of key individuals.

As was the case for governance, the most important data generated during the Site Study related to what parents actually do as paid paraprofessionals. Principally, we wanted to determine the extent to which parents actively participated in the education of youngsters through service as paid aides. Further, we wanted to assess the degree of parent aide involvement in decisions about the classroom instructional process as well as decisions about ESAA project design and school-wide instructional issues.

In all, 12 ESAA program sites were studied. Of the 12, ten reported having formal aide components in operation. The remaining two claimed no need for hiring any type of aide. Of the ten sites with components, five had parents that filled paid aide positions within the elementary grades of study schools. They have become the five target districts for the reporting in this section. An additional site, which will not be discussed as part of the five target districts, reported paid parent aides operating at the middle and high school levels, but not at the two elementary schools which were the subjects of the Site Study.

Within the five target sites that will make up the major focus of this section, 69 percent of the paid aides were parents, and 44 percent of those parents were classified as parents of youngsters served by the ESAA program. This does not mean that all five of these sites had a formal paid parent paraprofessional component; it simply means that out of the 12 sites studied, these five were the only ones with paid parent aides operating in an educational role. (These figures were drawn from the raw data presented in Table 6-2.)

The following presentation will be divided into five sections, each of which addresses a different aspect of parents operating as paid paraprofessionals. They are: Project Intentions/Parent Opportunities, Characteristics of Paid Paraprofessionals, Structure and Organization, Functioning of the Paid Paraprofessional Component, and Support for the Paid Paraprofessional Component.

PROJECT INTENTIONS/PARENT OPPORTUNITIES

The selection procedures used by the ESAA study sites involved detailed recruitment and hiring schemes which reveal the extent to which the programs or districts were committed to having parental involvement in the Paid Paraprofessional (PP) component. Because of the ESAA regulations which require that preference in hiring be given to parents of children attending ESAA schools, the specific intent on the part of the district or program staff to locate parents for available job positions becomes an important factor when discussing parents as paid paraprofessionals. The overall pattern emerging from the data reported in Table 6-1 indicates that of the ten sites that reported a formal aide component, only two (Merchant and Savin) made formal attempts to recruit parents. This means that of the five target districts that will be the focus of this section, three reported no special intent to hire parents; however, the three did provide definite opportunities for parents to apply.

It should be noted that there were no differences between districts making formal attempts to recruit parents and districts simply providing opportunities for them to apply, in terms of numbers of parents actually hired for the job. The percentages of parents serving as paid paraprofessionals were comparable at sites placing no formal emphasis on locating parents with those that did. This phenomenon is explained by a feature of the selection process that will be discussed in the next section.

In accounting for why districts tended not to hire parents, 50 percent of the 12 study sites said that it was because the pool of available parents had dropped significantly over the past few years. There were two factors that caused this: (1) the rise in inflation, which forced many parents to return to full-time jobs, and (2) parents of bused students living a distance from the schools, which made it difficult to participate and to cultivate a sense of ownership and responsibility for the school.

In addition, at 33 percent of the overall sites, administrators indicated that they weren't in favor of involving parents in instructional roles because parents generally had low levels of education, and could contribute very little to the academic community. Those administrators felt education should be left up to the educators, and very often this view was accepted by the parents as well.

SELECTION PROCESS

Recruitment and Hiring

There were no provisions in the candidate criteria, detailed in Table 6-1, which would act to effectively exclude parents from considerations for paid paraprofessional positions. On the other hand, one characteristic mentioned as desirable (prior volunteer work) gave parents an advantage. This was not a formalized criterion. Yet, it became significant because at four of the five target sites districts set up procedures which gave principals decision-making responsibilities for the recruitment and hiring of personnel who would eventually work in their buildings. When it came to filling aide positions, these principals preferred selecting candidates whom they personally knew, and whose work they had seen. Most such candidates originated from the pool of volunteers who were active at the school and who, for the most part, were parents.* This selection process, which involved giving school volunteers first priority, accounts for why 69 percent of the paid aides across the target sites were parents even though only two sites set out to explicitly hire parents. In fact, at Merchant and Chesterfield parents were actually told that if they wished to become paid paraprofessionals they should first become known through active volunteer work, such as participating in field trips and in non-ESAA classrooms.

In sum, although there was no formal intent on the part of most Site Study districts to locate parents for aide positions, by incorporating principals into the formal hiring process, four districts ensured the selection of some number of qualified parents. In each instance principals were either responsible for the final decision making, or they played such prominent advisory roles that their recommendations were respected and acted upon. (See Table 6-1 for a summarization of principal involvement.)

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*Candidate parents were not participants in ESAA-sponsored volunteer programs. As already noted, no such programs were in operation at Site Study schools. However, volunteer efforts sponsored by PTAs, districts, and other Federal education programs were in operation and enabled many parents to attain high levels of visibility in principals' eyes.

CHARACTERISTICS OF PAID PARAPROFESSIONALS

The data concerning characteristics of parent and non-parent aides, reported in Table 6-2, yielded no major findings that require elaboration. At the five target sites the data indicate that the aide component was solely comprised of women; these women were generally representative of the cross section of racial ethnic groups in the community, and they frequently emerged from the active rank of school volunteers.

STRUCTURE AND ORGANIZATION

Table 6-3 presents a summarization of data on the structure and organization of the paid paraprofessional component. No major findings are suggested by these variables. However, there are a number of secondary findings which convey an understanding of the ways in which aide components were structured and organized. These secondary findings are discussed briefly below.

FUNDING

Reductions in funding had clearly led to changes in the aide component at some sites. Chesterfield had been forced to make cutbacks in classroom paraprofessionals; Willyston had completely dropped its clerical aides; and Merchant had established a pivotal shift in focus from instructionally oriented aides to ones that performed only clerical and non-classroom duties. A reduction in the amount of training at these sites may also have been affected, but no data were reported to support this possibility.

KEY PERSONNEL

A variety of district and school personnel had some level of involvement with the ESAA paid paraprofessional components studied. These individuals included: the ESAA Project Director, district administrators, school principals, and other project staff (teachers, resource personnel, reading/math supervisors). A basic description of each one's role is presented in Table 6-3. However, the data suggest that principals tended to play the critical role in the progress of the component by assuming responsibility for the recruitment, hiring, assignment, and evaluation of the ESAA paid paraprofessionals.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF PAID PARAPROFESSIONALS

Formal, individual evaluations of paid paraprofessionals can affect their hiring, firing, and placement, and can also affect the overall assessment of the component itself. Therefore, they carry a certain level of import. Table 6-3 demonstrates that at the target sites, principals had a large measure of responsibility for conducting formal aide evaluations. At Chesterfield and Willyston the responsibility was shared jointly with an ESAA remedial supervisor. Of particular interest is the extent to which the different evaluation methods employed by principals and ESAA supervisors seemed to produce differential results. While we cannot support these tendencies as major findings (they have not been substantiated at all sites), we, nonetheless, feel they are interesting phenomena that warrant some attention.

In the sites where the principals had the primary responsibility for formally evaluating the performance of an aide (Winchester, Oxford, and Merchant), they generally visited the classroom throughout the year, personally observing and conversing with the aides, as well as gathering relevant information from the teachers. After the evaluation, the principal provided feedback to the aide regarding her performance. The outcome reported was that the aides began to feel a sense of real importance, based on the interest and suggestions provided by the principal. Conversely, the ESAA remedial supervisor at another site rarely visited the classrooms or conversed with the aides, and never provided any feedback to them about their overall performance. Consequently, the aides there reportedly had begun to question their own importance within the ESAA educational design.

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FUNCTIONING OF THE PAID PARAPROFESSIONAL COMPONENT

Table 6-4 displays the site-by-site data on variables related to the actual roles and responsibilities of paid paraprofessionals. We examined two dimensions of these responsibilities: (1) direct instructional involvement of paid parent paraprofessionals, and (2) non-instructional activities. For the purposes of the Site Study, instructional involvement encompassed direct teaching or tutoring, and classroom or instructional support, such as clerical duties and scoring of tests. Further, within this dimension, we looked for any decision-making inputs on the part of parents regarding classroom instructional activities and project-/school-wide instructional services. Non-instructional roles, on the other hand, included any duties that did not directly affect the classroom instructional process, such as playground or lunchroom monitoring, and any form of liaison work paid parent aides performed with parents or the community concerning ESAA services.

It should be noted that one of the major findings in this section is not suggested by Table 6-4. None of the five target sites made any distinctions between parents and non-parents in terms of assigning duties. In other words, parents and non-parents alike tended to participate in both instructional and non-instructional roles. The remainder of the section will discuss the features of these roles and responsibilities.

INSTRUCTIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

The classroom or instructional responsibilities for the paid parent aides in the majority of the sites revolved around basic skills reinforcement for students. We found no instances of parental involvement in instruction related to human relations or cross-cultural understanding. To reiterate, the basic skills responsibilities were identical for both parent and non-parent aides. A typical role involved such activities as:

- Creating and directing remedial reading/math games
- Administering mastery tests

- Keeping progress records up to date
- Tutoring children one on one or in small groups

Moreover, instructional support services carried out by aides included maintaining discipline and performing clerical duties (e.g., Xeroxing, maintaining equipment and materials, updating bulletin boards, grading papers). These instructional and support responsibilities were consistent with the findings from the FPS. Fifty-two percent of the schools surveyed in the FPS reported that one of the two activities most frequently engaged in by the aides was working with individuals or small groups, reviewing and reteaching skills and concepts they had already learned. Forty-three percent also reported giving special assistance to children with particular academic difficulties or weaknesses. Additionally, 60 percent of the schools with ESAA-paid aides reported that they assisted with non-instructional tasks (e.g., correcting papers) and in the acquisition, preparation, or retrieval of instructional materials.

DECISION-MAKING RESPONSIBILITIES

Connected to the roles and responsibilities that aides performed in the classroom environment were the types of decisions in which they participated. The data suggest that many of the paid aides (parent and otherwise) played little or no influential role in direct ESAA classroom decisions involving choice of materials, teaching methods, or duties to be performed. Such decisions were handled mainly by the classroom teachers. Aides were not provided formal opportunities to express their views in terms of how the children should be instructed, or what materials should be used.*

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*The use of the term "formal opportunities" is purposeful. At Savin, some teachers and their parent aides would frequently have informal discussions at which aide reaction would be solicited on the teacher's plans for the following day's work.

Two sites within the study, however, were notable as being exceptions to this rule. Both, interestingly, were the only sites where all of the paid aides were parents. Chesterfield, which had a remedial math program, allowed the PPPs to regularly select the instructional materials they wished to use while tutoring the children. Such freedom ultimately gave the PPPs a sense of importance and responsibility. At Willyston, the opportunities for instructional decision making were even greater. Because Willyston PPPs functioned within an ESAA reading laboratory helping several different reading teachers, they had the unique advantage of being able to assess whether certain instructional strategies were more successful than others. The ESAA teachers recognized this advantage and frequently asked the parents for their input on or assessment of various teaching strategies. The PPPs were thus in a position to influence the instructional patterns of the program.

There are three interacting factors which seem to account for why Chesterfield and Willyston had more aide participation in instructional decisions than other sites. First, teachers at these two sites had very positive attitudes toward aides and wanted to hear aides' viewpoints on instructional techniques and strategies. Second, the amount and frequency of formal and informal communication between aides and teachers were high, resulting in aides being well-informed. Third, a great deal of programmatic support in the form of pre- and in-service training workshops, as well as required visitations to other ESAA aide classrooms, was provided to aides at Chesterfield and Willyston. (Please see Table 6-5 for a tabulation of the training provided for paid paraprofessionals.)

As already indicated, the other major decision-making arena which we explored in the Site Study involved project design and/or school-wide instructional issues. The data revealed that by and large the paid aides had little influence in this arena. However, we found a few sites that did provide decision-making opportunities or outlets for paid aides to express themselves on these topics. For example, Savin regularly invited paid aides to attend school faculty meetings. Additionally, a few ESAA paid aides at Winchester and Merchant were actually elected as officers in the District-wide Advisory

Committees. Either of these outlets could have conceivably led to input into project or school-wide decision making. However, our data do not permit us to assess the extent to which such opportunities for aide participation in project or school-wide decision making actually led to valued suggestions or advice on the part of aides.

NON-INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

As was previously mentioned, non-instructional activities, for this study, included any student chaperoning and any parent/community liaison duties that related to the ESAA project. Because our focus was on parental involvement in the instructional process, we did not study non-instructional activities in an in-depth fashion. However, two findings are worth noting. First, 77 percent of the paid aides (parents and non-parents) regularly performed non-instructional duties that involved monitoring children at recess and in the cafeteria, and chaperoning on school-sponsored field trips. Second, only a few instances of paid aides serving as liaisons to the community emerged from the data.

With respect to the second finding, one might expect that aides, because of their involvement with ESAA instruction, would carry out some natural interfacing with parents, or even come to serve as a direct link for parents in the school. However, our data offered only one concrete example to substantiate this expectation. At Savin one teacher with an ESAA aide reported that parents from economically disadvantaged environments (Black and White alike), seemed to ask many more questions concerning the learning skills of their children than they had in the past when no aide was in the classroom. These parents were showing an increased confidence in the teacher's instructional skills because the aide had come to serve as a kind of bridge between what the teacher tried to do in the classroom, and the parents' understanding of these attempts.

Additional aide-parent interaction occurred at Savin in the form of a home outreach program, which is discussed in Part III of this chapter, and also in the chapter addressing Parent Coordination. These community aides will not be treated here because they had no classroom role.

Although we have emphasized that, on the whole, the study sites reported similar instructional responsibilities and decision-making involvement on the part of their paid aides, it may be of interest to briefly note here two examples that illustrate the extremes that we encountered. The first example (Chesterfield) is representative of the ESAA sites that encouraged more direct responsibility by the aides in actually planning lessons and presenting instructional games to students. The ESAA teachers at this site made suggestions concerning the math skill areas to be worked on, but the paid paraprofessionals (who operated in what were called math laboratories) were given the critical role of developing the specific day-to-day activities that would improve a particular skill. Some of these activities were self-checking instructional games prepared by the aides themselves, and some were simply prepared worksheets that reinforced the regular lessons.

Thus, the aides at Chesterfield not only had direct involvement in some form of small group or individualized instruction within a math laboratory, but they also made decisions involving choice of materials to improve certain skills, and had input into the specific goals that were designed for each ESAA math student. Chesterfield supported this high level of aide participation through a frequent flow of communication between the ESAA teachers and the paid paraprofessionals, and through formal training workshops. Project goals at this site emphasized the importance of communication links, and even though no formalized mechanism was provided for those links, the paid aides and the teachers interacted frequently on an informal basis. Much of this interchange was facilitated by the fact that the math labs were often located very near to the classrooms, which allowed teachers and paraprofessionals time to discuss the individual goals for each student in the program.

The second example (Merchant) demonstrates a marked disparity between what the aides actually did, and what the teachers stated as the formal roles of aides. According to the ESAA teachers the role of the paid aides (parents and non-parents alike) was to provide individualized instructional reinforcement to the students. In actuality, the aides performed very few instructional tasks. They performed primarily clerical and non-instructional duties. Two factors seemed to account for this situation. First, because of budgetary cuts, and because the teachers were newly unionized and were adverse to assuming any non-instructional duties, the district was reportedly forced to assign lunchroom, playground, and bus supervisory roles to aides for two hours of each day. Secondly, the project design was a contributory factor because it called for money to be spent on remedial teaching machines for reading and math. Both the PPs and the teachers began relying on the machines for concept reinforcement; hence a decrease in the instructional responsibilities for the aides occurred. This situation made a definite impact on the parent aides, who constituted the majority of paraprofessionals at this site. They were virtually powerless in terms of decision making. Because their duties were primarily non-instructional in nature, any chances they may have had for influencing the ESAA program or classroom instructional methods had been greatly diluted. Further, they received no formal training from the project or the teachers either before or during their assignment as paid aides.

Another interesting aspect of the Merchant situation was reported by the aides. They claimed that the formal design of the ESAA project actually called for use of paid aides in non-instructional roles, mainly because the administration was opposed to enlisting volunteers to perform such duties. Administrators believed that paid personnel exhibit a much higher degree of commitment and dependability; therefore, paid aides were earmarked for non-instructional roles.

TRAINING FOR THE PAID PARAPROFESSIONAL COMPONENT

Training for the paid paraprofessional component is divided into two forms--pre- and in-service. The data are presented in Table 6-5. They yielded one primary finding. As was briefly mentioned earlier, there appears to be a direct positive relationship between the provision of training workshops and the classroom decision-making responsibilities of the paid aides. The data show that the three sites that encouraged either formal or informal aide participation in classroom instructional decisions (i.e., Chesterfield, Willyston, and Savin) were the same three sites that provided a good deal of pre- and in-service training for parent and non-parent ESAA aides.

Of the three sites offering some measure of training, Savin provided the only workshop designed specifically to bring ESAA teachers and aides together. Its focus was to build better working relations between the two groups, and it was reported to have been successful. The teachers were made aware of the kinds of duties aides could and should perform, and they subsequently began interacting with and supporting them (the aides) in their performance of instructional related duties. The training workshops thus helped the aides feel as if they were an integral part of the classroom instructional process.

The apparent importance of training in making parent aides credible participants in the decision-making process at three of our sites leads us to reflect upon a primary reason proffered at the other two sites for not providing opportunities for parental input into significant decisions. The claim was made that parents cannot play meaningful roles in decision making because they do not possess the requisite skills. Given that assumption, one would have anticipated the provision of training at these sites, if parental input had been genuinely desired.

Data concerning support for the PP component, beyond training, yielded some interesting findings. One of the most notable suggests that, unlike governance, at the majority of the target sites the ESAA Project Directors maintained little or no involvement in the formal paid aide program. They neither visited the schools nor monitored or controlled the program. This does not mean that they were not supportive of the aide component. Quite the opposite was found. Whether or not they were personally involved with the aides, the Project Directors were perceived as generally supportive of the component.

Principal support and involvement in the ESAA paid paraprofessional component was basically quite high. As we have seen, principals tended to be the key actors in the recruitment and hiring of parent aides, as well as being responsible for completing the formal, yearly evaluations. Four sites reported that their principals were very supportive of the program, and were vital to its overall effectiveness. At the other site (Winchester), however, both principals seemed to remain on the periphery of the component. While they maintained final authority in the hiring of aides, and took an active role in their evaluations, these principals offered no other specific support. Only when the ESAA teachers could not resolve certain problems or issues involving aides would the principals lend their assistance.

The attitudes of the ESAA teachers toward the component varied. They basically formed two camps--positive and negative. We found that the teachers with the most positive attitudes were the ones at Willyston and Chesterfield where the total aide population was comprised of parents. Teachers at these sites, as well as at Savin, made the PPPs feel as though they were an important part of the education team by attending joint workshops, communicating with them frequently, and informally monitoring their progress. Such positive interactions led to increased decision-making opportunities for the aides, and ultimately to more positive attitudes on their parts concerning personal contributions to the ESAA instructional program.

Teachers at the other two sites reacted more negatively toward parents serving as paid aides. Many reported that they were basically not comfortable having parents in the classroom. These teachers felt that parents were not properly trained in specific teaching methods, and that they were sometimes too involved with their own children to be objective. Further, these negative teachers never attended any workshops with parent aides nor did they provide them with anything more than written descriptions of their roles and responsibilities. Such attitudes, and the resultant behaviors, apparently led to a perpetuation of fewer meaningful responsibilities for the aides, and to a clear strain in teacher-aide working relationships.

SUMMARY OF CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AS PAID PARAPROFESSIONALS

This section will attempt to summarize the major findings which have been presented concerning parents serving as ESAA paid paraprofessionals. In addition, we will review in a systematic fashion those factors which our data suggest are responsible for the major findings. Finally, we will devote the latter part of this section to a discussion of the few consequences reported as having stemmed from parental involvement as paid aides.

Only five of the twelve ESAA sites studied were found to have parents acting as paid paraprofessionals. Although the ESAA regulations call for LEAs to give parents of children attending ESAA schools preference in the recruiting and hiring of teacher aides (paraprofessionals), only five sites had parents operating in the role of paid paraprofessionals, and only two sites undertook formal efforts to recruit parents for openings. Two major reasons were identified which accounted for why districts on the whole tended not to hire parents. First, 50 percent of the 12 sites reported that a drop in the available pool of parent volunteers significantly reduced the chances of finding parent applicants. Site personnel attributed this drop in available parents to: (1) the rise in inflation, which forced many parents to return to full-time jobs, and (2) the difficulty that parents of bused students living a distance from the school had in participating in any of the ESAA-sponsored activities, or in even cultivating a sense of ownership and responsibility for the school.

Second, 33 percent of the overall sites reported that they simply were not in favor of involving parents in instructional roles because they felt parents generally had low levels of education, and could contribute very little to the academic community. Administrators at these sites believed that education should be left up to the educators, and very often this view prevailed among the parents themselves.

Although few conscious attempts were made to hire parents as aides, many were recruited through methods employed by the school principals. Our data have strongly supported the notion that at Site Study sites principals were the main force behind the success of the paid aide programs. More importantly, the principals actually secured paid aide positions for parents through their recruitment methods which focused on choosing candidates from the active pool of school volunteers. So, even though the majority of the target districts made no conscious attempts to hire qualified parents, parents were nonetheless frequently chosen because they tended to constitute a plurality of the volunteer ranks. Because of this hiring preference on the part of principals at many ESAA sites, volunteerism became a sort of proving ground for demonstrating personal interest in the school and its educational programs. In short, unofficial conventional practice turned volunteering into a springboard by which parents could gain the more prized role of paid paraprofessional.

No distinctions were made between parent and non-parent aides in terms of their duties, training, or evaluations. The paid paraprofessional component was divided into two basic categories for the purposes of this study--instructional and non-instructional roles. It was discovered through analysis of the functioning of paid paraprofessionals that, once hired, both parent and non-parent aides performed virtually identical duties in both the categories. We anticipated that parent aides might tend to get assigned clerical or non-instructional duties such as playground monitoring, while non-parent aides might tend to get assigned classroom, instruction-related duties. The data, however, did not support this hypothesis. No distinctions seemed to be made in assigning responsibilities. Few contributing factors existed to explain this situation, other than positive attitudes displayed by the teachers and principals. Most of them treated the parent aides as though they were an integral part of the education team, and therefore communicated with them frequently, attended joint workshops, and monitored their progress. They did the same for the non-parent aides.

The same factors held true for the training and evaluation of paid aides. The support network operated on the same basis for both parent and non-parent paraprofessionals. Pre- and in-service workshops would (at some sites) be held for all of the ESAA aides regardless of parental status; similarly, all aides were monitored and evaluated under a common set of criteria.

The majority of paid aides had little or no decision-making role in the design or functioning of the paid paraprofessional component, or in decisions involving classroom methods and materials. Related to the activities that the aides performed in the classroom were the types of decisions in which they participated. Without exception, the ESAA aides studied had no influence on project design or school-level issues. It was found, however, that while no direct influences were being exerted by aides, some sites did provide decision-making opportunities or outlets for paid aides (parents and otherwise) to express themselves on project design and/or school-level issues. One site regularly invited paid aides to attend school faculty meetings in order to keep abreast of school issues, as well as to enhance the meetings with aide input. Further, at two sites aides had been elected officers of the district-level PAC; as officers they potentially could have influenced the direction of the paraprofessional program, although the data suggest that decisions remained mostly under the jurisdiction of the project administrators.

Reasons for the lack of aide involvement in project and school-level decision making range from the school structure being under the tight control of the district, with little opportunity for influence from outside the administration, to skepticism about the level of education of parent aides and their subsequent ability to provide significant recommendations to the component. Another contributing factor, which perhaps limited aide participation in decision making, was the lack of formal communication between aides and professional staff members, and among the aides themselves. Only two sites held formal meetings for aides. And at one site, there was only one ESAA paid aide per school, so communication with other district aides was difficult.

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Concerning classroom decision making that involved choices of materials, teaching methods, or duties to be performed, many of the aides, once again, played little or no role in direct ESAA classroom decisions. However, three sites did provide their aides with some opportunity for influencing the selection of instructional materials to be used while tutoring. At these sites, aides were also frequently asked for their overall assessment of the instructional strategies used by different teachers, and were allowed to create instructional games for small group or individual tutoring sessions. Not coincidentally, these were the three sites that provided a high level of aide training, which leads to the conclusion that more direct responsibility by aides is related to heightened programmatic support. This conclusion, in essence, is a major finding of the Study and is discussed in the section below.

There seems to be a direct positive correlation between the provision of training workshops for aides and their level of classroom decision-making opportunities. In trying to learn why specific sites allowed a greater breadth of responsibility for the paid paraprofessionals--namely, classroom decision-making responsibility--three distinct elements were found that were unique to such sites. These elements involved teacher/staff attitudes, communication flow, and, most importantly, training workshops. Positive teacher attitudes have been found to germinate positive interactions with the paid aides, which in turn have led to greater confidence concerning aide contributions to the ESAA instructional program. Positive attitudes by teachers and other professional staff also serve to create an atmosphere in which the sharing of ideas becomes almost commmonplace. With the flow of communication strongly set in motion, important information concerning the project itself, classroom instructional activities, teaching strategies, and paid aide responsibilities get exchanged. Only by maintaining a role in this mainstream of communication can the aides update their level of information, thereby developing their potential as decision makers.

Germane to this entire process is the overriding factor of programmatic support. In all three of the sites where aides were provided with classroom decision-making opportunities, several pre- and in-service training workshops were regularly offered for ESAA paid aides. In short, it is those sites that offered training or education for their aides that, in turn, provided opportunities for them to express their views on classroom methods and materials. Training and the chance for greater responsibilities go hand in hand. In contrast, those sites reporting no decision-making roles for aides, also reported negative attitudes toward involving parents in the instructional process, and toward providing any training opportunities for the aides, either before their job began or throughout the duration of their work year.

OUTCOMES

During the course of the Site Study, we gathered data on the impact of parental involvement on: (1) the behavior and attitudes of persons touched by parental involvement, including the participants themselves; and (2) educational processes and institutional arrangements. The latter area was divided into eight sub-areas, including project design/implementation, administrative practice, curricular content, etc.

Because so few sites had parents involved in the instructional process, we had difficulty, during analysis, in identifying actual patterns of outcomes which cut across sites. However, the data did contain examples of consequences of parental involvement as paid paraprofessionals--examples which seem to substantiate the potential importance of parental participation in this functional area.

In the realm of educational-institutional outcomes, some teachers reported that because parent aides knew intimate details about a child's background and living conditions they (teachers) were able to change their teaching approaches to better compensate for that child's needs. Another reported outcome involved student performance. Many of the ESAA students acquired a renewed sense of interest and motivation in their studies, primarily because parents were present in the classrooms providing support, instruction, and enthusiasm. Often, because the parent aides personally knew them, the students would try to perform well to receive individual praise. This finding on student performance may serve to clarify a conclusion reached by a prior study of the ESAA program. An in-depth study of a subset of ESAA schools conducted in 1976 (Wellisch *et al.*) concluded that student achievement showed greater gains when *parents* were present in the classroom as instructional aides or volunteers. Although we did not measure student achievement *per se*, respondents (including teachers and parents of students) did report what they perceived to be increased student commitment to their studies in several classrooms with parent aides. More importantly, as noted, respondents tended to explain this improvement by asserting that students would try hard to receive praise from parent aides whom they knew personally, and that parent aides would provide especially sensitive support and enthusiasm to the youngsters.

Further, some teachers with ESAA parent aides mentioned that parents from the community (generally those living in low socioeconomic environments) seemed to ask many more questions about the learning skills of their children than they had before the parent aide was hired. This increase in parental interest concerning student performance and teaching methods came as a result of the aide serving as the primary link between the parents and the school. In other words, the aides acted as a kind of bridge between what teachers tried to do in the classroom, and the parents' understanding of those attempts.

At Willyston, respondents reported that better teaching strategies have resulted from having the parent aides inject their perspectives on student progress. Since part of the responsibility of the aides was to record the test scores for the children, they brought information to the discussion that the teacher often did not have. Further, because PPPs at this site frequently worked with several teachers in the reading lab, they were the only ones who had a global perspective on all of the different teaching strategies. Discussions regarding instructional strategies therefore always included the comments of the aides. Sometimes changes in strategies were made according to what the aides had reported.

Finally, teachers at two sites also reported that some parent aides were especially creative in their approach toward tutoring math; in fact, the methods and materials of these aides were so well conceived and inventive that they were adopted by the teachers for use in classrooms.

Generally, the individual/personal outcomes that were most commonly reported by parent aides as deriving from their involvement in the instructional process included: considerable gains in self-confidence; an increased ability to understand the school personnel, administration, and overall structure; a high degree of satisfaction from seeing a child make educational gains; feelings that they could more effectively help and understand their own children; and pleasure from simply gaining more knowledge themselves.

III. SITE STUDY FINDINGS: PARENTS AS ESAA VOLUNTEERS

Although there is no specific mandate that ESAA schools actively recruit volunteers, SDC wanted to investigate the participation of parents in this role because it appeared to be another excellent way through which parents could become familiar with the workings of the school system and perhaps the ESAA project. We discovered that at the 12 sites studied, no ESAA-sponsored volunteer components were in operation. Neither parents nor non-parents were functioning in volunteer roles that were organized by ESAA. (Indeed, the FPS report demonstrated that only 18 percent of the overall ESAA schools had a volunteer component in their project.) This does not mean that these 12 sites were opposed to involving volunteers within their ESAA program; it simply means that a variety of circumstances existed which served to limit the need for designing a formal ESAA program. The most prevalent circumstances found included:

- Having long-established, non-ESAA volunteer programs already operating on site which included participation by ESAA and non-ESAA parents
- A general cutback in volunteer programs because of the economy, which had forced many parents back to work
- The decision on the part of districts not to have a volunteer program because they preferred hiring professionals to do the work instead

Brief mention should be made here, however, of one of the study sites where a slightly different set of circumstances prevailed. For this site, although there were no ESAA-sponsored volunteer components at either of the two target schools, an ESAA-sponsored paired assistance project did operate within the district, using parent volunteers in connection with ESAA student services. Although neither of the study schools had involved themselves in this paired school assistance program, it should be noted that some form of parent volunteerism did exist within an ESAA project.

IV. SITE STUDY FINDINGS: PARENTS AS HOME TUTORS

Formal programs that are designed to involve parents as teachers of their own children at home are not specifically mandated by the ESAA guidelines. However, we were interested in exploring all useful and important areas in which parents may participate in the instructional process. Home tutoring, therefore, represented a good example of the possible partnerships that could develop between the home and the school. The major finding for this section was that the vast majority of the 12 sites studied placed no emphasis on utilizing parents as instructors of their own children. However, this section will be given some coverage because one site did have a formally operating component, and two others did provide some form of home tutoring services to parents of ESAA-served children. Most importantly, these limited home tutoring efforts seemed to have been meeting with a measure of success.

MAJOR FINDINGS

The basic finding for this section, then, is that the majority of the sites sampled placed no emphasis on utilizing parents as instructors in their own homes. Serious district and ESAA budget cutbacks in many cases were the reasons given by project staff as to why home tutoring programs were not developed at their sites.

Of the 11 sites that reported having no formally operating component, it should be mentioned that two provided some minimal functions. One site sent out a newsletter that suggested activities that parents could do to supplement the multicultural instruction received by their children. And another offered a single evening session that taught parents how to select and make learning materials which could be used by their children at home. (The newletter is more fully discussed in the section addressing Community-School Relations.)

For the one site (Savin) that had a formally operating component, two forms of home tutoring activities existed. One was designed to reach parents who did not have easy access to the school or who may not have had means of transportation, and the other was designed to bring people together in the school environment. The first method involved three part-time community aides who were under the supervision of the ESAA Reading Supervisor. These aides functioned primarily in the field, driving door-to-door helping parents of pre-school and early school age children learn strategies for assisting their children in language development, math, and reading readiness. As such, these aides provided learning materials (e.g., puzzles, games, brochures with helpful teaching hints), and some counseling assistance, if needed by the parents. They each spent six to ten hours per week on these tasks. The other home tutoring activity was personally coordinated by the Reading Supervisor. It amounted to a training workshop held at the school which provided parents with ideas and materials for enriching their children's experiences at home in reading or math. One such workshop, held during data collection, utilized ESAA classroom teachers as training leaders. Although limited in nature, this program appeared to be working fairly effectively. The community aides and Reading Supervisor were dedicated individuals who worked well together and who knew how to communicate with parents. From observations made on site, the aides (who were parents themselves) were warmly received on their weekly rounds by both the parents and children. And, further reports indicate that the children appeared to be benefiting from the home tutoring exercises.

It should be pointed out that three factors operating at this site seemed to increase the effectiveness of this program. First, the district was very pro parental involvement and could be assured of high levels of interest from the traditionally tight-knit, rural community. Secondly, the Project Coordinator expended considerable effort to ensure that home tutoring programs received extensive publicity in the local schools and in the media. The third important element concerned the ESAA Reading Supervisor, who essentially designed and managed the home outreach program. Without her efforts and constant interaction with the community aides, this program would not have been the success it was.

OUTCOMES

Some rather prominent outcomes emerged as a direct result of the door-to-door contact made by the community aides at Savin. Parents, who were visited regularly by these aides, expressed a strong belief that their children had improved in math and reading skills, and that they showed more interest in these subject areas. Substantiating this statement, teachers reported a pronounced improvement in performance as a result of the tutoring. Additionally, a few parents indicated that as a result of their frequent contact with the community aides, they became more aware of their own inabilities to effectvely help their children. And, consequently, with the aides' encouragement, they actually returned to high school to improve their own education.

Finally, the community aides performed an important communication function for the ESAA project. They provided parents with information concerning upcoming events within the ESAA program, and with information concerning project resources which existed for their children. This aspect of the community aides' work proved to be invaluable to parents.

V. CONCLUSIONS

This section will present some conclusions about ways in which parental participation in the ESAA instructional process could be enhanced. The suggestions contained herein are based on the assumption that more parental involvement in the instructional process is desired by Federal or local policy makers. All three of the mechanisms for participation will be discussed--paid paraprofessionals, volunteers, and home tutors; but because of the lack of sites having volunteer and home-tutoring components, our suggestions are weighted toward paid paraprofessionals.

The content of this section grows directly out of strategies that were successful at one or more of our sites. As was the case in governance, we try to confine our remarks to concrete actions that can be taken on the part of the Federal program office and/or local practitioners. Further, we center our discussion on the three vital areas of recruitment, classroom responsibilities, and support features, trying to offer a coherent treatment of each.

Our data certainly suggest that LEAs don't actively recruit qualified parents for paid aide or volunteer positions. We believe that such recruitment efforts should be undertaken and should be built upon several principles. First, job openings must be advertised as widely as possible. Mailed fliers can be sent directly to the homes of parents of served students. Direct mailing is advocated because youngsters frequently lose school announcements in transit from school to home. Similar announcements could be placed in local newspapers, PTA bulletins, and school newsletters and made verbally at evening gatherings of parents at schools and district offices.

Second, personal contact is often the key to successful recruitment. People at times need face-to-face encouragement in order to view themselves as viable candidates for available positions. Therefore, valuable personal contact can be established by teachers, principals, DAC members, Parent Coordinators, etc., with parents who may serve well as an aide or volunteer. At a few Site

Study sites, principals in particular tended to play an important role in personally encouraging parents whom they knew to apply as paid paraprofessionals. These principals searched for qualified candidates among the ranks of active school volunteers, mainly because they (the principals) were familiar with the work and dedication of these individuals. The volunteer ranks in turn were populated predominatly by parents, so that principals were, in essence, acting to recruit parents for paraprofessional positions.

Advertising positions carefully and encouraging certain parents to apply is undeniably important, but equally important is establishing positions which attract parents by giving them a measure of real responsibility in assisting with the educational process. To put it another way, parents are interested in roles that provide some sense of responsibility. For the most part, parents in the Site Study were not interested solely in functioning as playground or cafeteria monitors. They seemed genuinely desirous of contributing to the educational progress of students and to the betterment of the ESAA program. Thus, we believe that as many instructional-related classroom duties as possible should be given to paid aides--duties that involve some level of personal or group reinforcement. Such activities could include:

- Creating and presenting math/reading games
- Helping children choose and understand subject material
- Administering and correcting student tests
- Reinforcing basic skills
- Making home visits

Further, wherever possible, relevant decision-making opportunities in the areas of designing and/or implementing the instructional components can be offered to participating parents. Paid paraprofessionals, for instance, could provide relevant input into the materials and methods that will be used in the instruction of children, as was the case at Willyston. There parent aides were in the position of working firsthand with a variety of teachers who used different instructional methods. They were, therefore, able to help assess the effectiveness of one teaching strategy over another and provide significant input into instructional decisions. Decision-making outlets could, we believe, be established in the form of regular faculty meetings that involve paid aides, ESAA teachers, and principals, and also through DAC meetings at which paid parent representatives could share their insights into the ways ESAA classrooms operate.

With respect to volunteers, we are at a distinct disadvantage in making suggestions because no sites in the Site Study had active ESAA-sponsored volunteer components. However, a number of sites had successful long-standing volunteer programs in operation; we suggest that if there is interest in generating ESAA volunteer efforts in the future, existing programs be studied carefully as potential models for ESAA undertakings. In general, Site Study information makes it seem advisable to assign non-instructional activities to volunteers rather than to paid paraprofessionals. We have in mind such non-instructional activities as:

- Supervising on field trips
- Working in school libraries
- Monitoring playgrounds, cafeterias, and school buses
- Planning school parties and fiestas
- Xeroxing materials

This suggestion is predicated on a pattern which we observed at a few sites whereby paid aides tended to have "graduated" through hard work from volunteer positions into the more prized role of paraprofessional. It is reasonable in such cases to assign duties commensurate with the differentiated status and abilities of volunteers vs. paid paraprofessionals.

If parents, as is being advocated here, are to be given significant responsibilities within the ESAA instructional process and even encouraged to participate in decision making concerning instructional methods and materials, then clearly systematic attention needs to be paid to vital support elements such as training and communications. Training sessions, like those held at Savin, could profitably involve both parents and teachers. Such sessions enable both professionals and paraprofessionals to become aware of the duties aides should be performing; even more important, both parties can begin to build the kind of cooperative working relationships which will be vital in the classroom. Topics for training sessions might include:

- Enhancing the ability of aides to work with people of multi-ethnic backgrounds
- How to build a positive learning environment
- Guidelines to constructing teaching materials
- Techniques in individualized and/or small group instruction
- How to motivate students and be sensitive to their developmental stages
- How to communicate with parents and teachers

Training efforts need not be limited to the pre-service variety. In-service workshops can take on a useful problem-centered focus because by that time parents are more aware of the problems and difficulties which they confront in their jobs. In addition, at least one of our sites (Chesterfield) instituted an arrangement by which aides could be expected to learn from one another. Aides were required to make formal visitations of four hours each to the labs of other ESAA instructional aides to observe techniques and materials employed.

Another important aspect of these site visitations is that they promoted communication among paraprofessionals. Our data suggest that communication both between professionals and paraprofessionals and among paraprofessionals is a critical contributor to enhanced job performance on the part of instructional aides. In particular, when an aide is assuming important instructional responsibilities, he/she should be part of an information and feedback network which serves to stimulate improved instructional ideas and strategies.

Attendance at faculty and/or aide meetings, written announcements/memos from the district or ESAA administrative staff, weekly planning and problem-solving meetings with classroom teachers can all assist in keeping parent aides informed and energized. Moreover, informal and formal communication with others having similar instructional goals helps to impart a sense of value and importance to parent participants.

Throughout this conclusions section, we have not commented on two areas of potential interest to program level and local policymakers. First of all, the mechanism of parental involvement as home tutors has not been addressed. We simply did not have enough information available from the Site Study to presume to offer major recommendations. Second, we have not touched upon parental involvement in the instructional domain beyond remedial reading and math. Indeed, the lack of any parental activity at our 12 sites in instruction related to human relations and cross-cultural understanding forces us to refrain from specific suggestions addressed to this important area of instruction. This is particularly unfortunate because the ESAA program emphasis will increasingly lie in this area. In any event, many of our previous comments in this section on recruitment, responsibilities, and support features are probably applicable to parents assisting in human relations and cross-cultural instruction.

	WINCHESTER	WILLYSTON	MERCHANT	CHESTERFIELD	SAVIN
HIRING POLICY	No parent priority	No parent priority	Priority to parents	No parent priority	Priority to parents
NUMBER OF AIDES: PARENTS/TOTAL	6/13	2/2	9/11	2/2	6/8
RECRUITMENT STRATEGY	Notices to homes Posted notices Media announcements	Notices to homes Posted notices Media announcements Personal contact	Posted notices Media announcements Personal contact Informal network	Posted notices Media announcements Personal contact	Posted notices Media announcements Personal contact Informal network
HIRING INPUT	Principal Teachers Parents	District personnel office Principal	Superintendent Project Director Board Members Principal	District personnel office Principal	Superintendent Principal
FINAL HIRING AUTHORITY	Principal	Personnel office District Administrator	Board of Education	Personnel office Principal	Superintendent Principal
HIRING CRITERIA	H.S. education Functional literacy Prior vol. work desired	H.S. education Functional literacy Prior vol. work desired Subject matter proficiency	H.S. education Prior vol. work desired Clerical skills	H.S. education Prior vol. work desired Subject matter proficiency	H.S. education Functional literacy
ASSIGNMENT	Made on basis of need	Made on basis of need	Made on basis of need	Made on basis of need	Made on basis of need

Table 6-1. Project Intentions/Parent Opportunities

		WINCHESTER	WILLYSTON	MERCHANT	CHESTERFIELD	SAVIN
PARENTS	SEX	6F	2F	9F	2F	6F
	AGE	26-43	Over 50	Under 35	31-50	30-40
	ETHNICITY	W: 33% H: 67%	W: 100%	W: 44% B: 56%	W: 100%	W: 50% B: 50%
	EDUCATION	No data	High School: 100%	High School: 100%	College: 100%	High School: 100%
NON-PARENTS	SEX	7F	0	2F	0	2F
	AGE	26-43	—	No data	—	30-40
	ETHNICITY	W: 71% H: 29%	—	W: 50% B: 50%	—	No data
	EDUCATION	No data	—	High School: 100%	—	High School: 100%

LEGEND:

SEX
F = Female

ETHNICITY
W = White
H = Hispanic
B = Black

Table 6-2. Characteristics of Paid Aides

		WINCHESTER	WILLYSTON	MERCHANT	CHESTERFIELD	SAVIN
YEARS IN OPERATION		2	8	6	3	8
FUNDING SOURCES		ESAA, State/district	ESAA	ESAA, State/district	ESAA, State/district	ESAA, State/district
CHANGES IN COMPONENTS		Reduction in funding	Reduction in funding leading to dropping of clerical aides	Reduction in district funding leading to switch to aide responsibilities from instructional to non-instructional	Reduction in funding leading to cutbacks in number of aides	None reported
KEY PERSONNEL ROLES	PROJECT DIRECTOR	No direct involvement	No direct involvement	Selects Evaluates	No direct involvement	Helps organize training
	PRINCIPALS	Selects Evaluates	Input into selection Evaluates	Input into selection Contact at staff meetings Evaluates	Selects Evaluates	Selects Evaluates
	TEACHERS	Monitors Input into selection and evaluation	Monitors Input into evaluation	Monitors Input into evaluation	Monitors	Monitors
	OTHER PROJECT STAFF (RESOURCE TEACHERS, MATH/READING SUPERV., ETC.)	None	Coordinates aide program operations Evaluates	Supervises Evaluates	Some monitoring/supervision	Some monitoring
DISTINCTION MADE: ESAA AND NON-ESAA, PARENT AND NON-PARENTS		None	None	ESAA aides separate component	ESAA aides separate component	None
EVALUATION OF AIDES		Formal by principal Informal by teacher	Formal by principal and ESAA remedial supervisor, yearly Informal by teacher, ongoing	Formal by principal and ESAA staff Informal by teachers	Formal by principal and ESAA remedial supervisor, yearly Informal by Math Supervisor, ongoing	Formal by principal yearly Informal by teacher, ongoing

Table 6-3. Structure and Organization of Aide Component

		WINCHESTER	WILLYSTON	MERCHANT	CHESTERFIELD	SAVIN
INSTRUCTIONAL ROLE	INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES	Reinforce skills Plan daily lessons	Reinforce skills Plan daily lessons Test pupils	None	Reinforce skills Create materials Plan daily lessons	Reinforce skills Teach concepts Create materials Plan daily lessons
	PARTICIPATION IN INSTRUCTIONAL DECISION MAKING	None, but opportunity at school level through SAC membership	Classroom level	None, but opportunity at project level through DAC membership	Classroom level - for the math lab	Classroom level Opportunity at school level through faculty meetings
	INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT ACTIVITIES	Maintain discipline Help with clerical tasks	Maintain discipline Help with clerical tasks Maintain progress records	Maintain discipline Help with clerical tasks	Maintain discipline Help with clerical tasks Maintain progress records	Maintain discipline Help with clerical tasks
NON-INSTRUCTIONAL ROLE	NON-INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES	Supervise student activities outside of classroom Communicate with parents through SAC membership	Supervise student activities outside of classroom	Supervise student activities outside of classroom Communicate with parents through DAC membership	Supervise student activities outside of classroom	Supervise student activities outside of classroom Communicate with parents as informal liaison

Table 6-4. Functioning of Aide Component

	WINCHESTER	WILLYSTON	MERCHANT	CHESTERFIELD	SAVIN
PRE-SERVICE TRAINING	None	None	None	4 hours, by project staff	No data
IN-SERVICE TRAINING	None	3 days, by project staff	None	2 sessions per year for 4 hours each, by project staff Approximately 8 required visits to other ESAA labs for minimum of 4 hours each	3 sessions per year for 2 days each, by project staff, consultants

Table 6-5. Training of Aides

CHAPTER 7

OTHER FORMS OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

I. INTRODUCTION

This chapter will analyze the extent to which parents at the 12 Site Study sites were involved in non-mandated forms of parental participation other than those related to the instructional process. During the Site Study, we looked specifically for parental participation in three areas: as the subjects of training or educational efforts to improve them as individuals; as the providers of non-instructional services designed to support the project; and as key actors in attempts to enhance the quantity and quality of community-school relations. In addition, respondents were asked to identify any mechanisms for program-sponsored parental involvement which might have escaped the conceptual framework for the study. As it turned out, none of the latter activities was discovered. Thus, this chapter will focus on parent education, school support services, and community-school relations as the three functional areas (other than the instructional process) in which non-mandated ESAA parental involvement occurred.

In general, our data in these three other areas were not as extensive as in governance or the instructional area. On the one hand, parental participation was more limited, especially with respect to parent education and school support; on the other hand, we did not attempt to scrutinize these activities as carefully as governance or instructional activities. Consequently, the sections which follow will provide the reader with a basic grasp of the nature and extent of ESAA-sponsored parental involvement in parent education, school support, and community-school relations activities, without being able to elaborate patterns of consequences and contributory factors. Finally, it should be noted again that none of the three areas under study in this section represents activities mandated in the ESAA regulations.

PLAN FOR THE CHAPTER

The chapter consists of six parts. Following this introduction, Parts II, III, and IV will be devoted to discussion of parental involvement in the realms of parent education, school support services, and community-school relations respectively. Part V analyzes some of the factors which seem to have caused parental involvement in these realms to take shape as they did in the Site Study. Finally, in Part VI we offer some limited suggestions, based on our data, to individuals interested in enhancing parental involvement in the three areas under study.

MAJOR FINDINGS

The major findings for this chapter include:

- Only one of the 12 study sites had activities in all three of the subject components.

- The majority of the study sites provided a variety of opportunities for improving community-school relations. Most relied on a combination of home-school outreach services, Parent Coordinator liaison activities, and one-way written communication efforts.

- In all of the six study sites that claimed to have no ESAA-sponsored school support activities, successful non-ESAA sponsored support functions were already in operation.

- Parents generally played no role in determining the function or content of any of the activities offered within the realms of parent education, school support, or community-school relations.

II. PARENT EDUCATION PROGRAMS

With the advent of compensatory education programs, schools increasingly began to offer parent education to help lower-income parents better cope with the problems of daily living, specifically with respect to parenting. Today, it is evident that parent education is considered a legitimate parental involvement function, open to all parents regardless of socioeconomic status, in many federally funded education projects.

For the purpose of the Site Study, we defined parent education as ESAA-sponsored efforts to improve parents as individuals. Such efforts could potentially involve a wide variety of activities including instruction in parenting skills, instruction on the availability of community resources, etc. However, classes designed expressly to teach parents to help children with schoolwork were considered to be part of home tutoring programs and, as such, were treated in Chapter 6.

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES

With respect to the 12 ESAA study sites, only four reported providing any form of parent education activities (see Table 7-1). These four (Bench, Hare, Winchester and Newcastle) identified one common purpose--to develop positive approaches to parenting, helping parents to become more effective parents as well as citizens. This major purpose was accomplished through project-sponsored workshops conducted primarily by ESAA staff (counselors, teacher/facilitators, Parent Coordinator), and guest speakers or specialists.

Information was provided on specific areas such as positive consistency in discipline, developing family communication skills, and providing positive reinforcement. In addition, three of the four sites with parent education components reported that guest speakers conducted special workshops throughout the year on topics which included the use of Mace when entering unsafe areas, assertiveness training for school committee officers (e.g., how to conduct meetings, generate agendas, and select guest speakers), instruction on human relations objectives (how to be aware of racism and sexism in student textbooks), and what to do about an overabundance of television viewing. One site (Hare) also sponsored self-improvement classes for parents in arts and crafts, sewing, and physical fitness. Typically, the guest speakers engaged in parent education were psychologists from local universities, police department representatives, or members from the community and school district itself.

The frequency of parent education efforts was fairly consistent across the four sites. Those workshops that directly addressed parenting skills were generally held monthly, while the special workshops were offered periodically or two to three times a year (with the exception of the arts and crafts classes at Hare which were held twice a month).

Our data suggest that parent workshops often served a second purpose in addition to the primary one of educating parents. At sites experiencing difficulty in securing parental involvement in ESAA activities, ESAA personnel used these workshops to attract parents to school for an interesting, nonthreatening set of activities, in the hope that parents could then be encouraged to participate in other parental involvement activities. This notion seems to be supported by the fact that those sites with virtually no parent education activities had substantial levels of parental participation in the instructional process, school support, and/or community-school relations areas, whereas most of the sites with parent education programs had little such activity.

Recruitment procedures, intended to get parents to participate in parent education activities, varied across the four sites. Flyers were sent home via the mail and with ESAA students; some announcements were printed in the ESAA newsletters; and parents were occasionally contacted by telephone, or in person. Responsibility for recruitment was equally as varied. At one site the principal handled the dispatchment of flyers, while at another site the community aides personally invited the parents. At yet another, the ESAA teachers, principal, and parent advisory group members selected a specific number of participants to attend. Only one site (Winchester) recruited non-ESAA as well as ESAA parents. This was probably due to the fact that the district's compensatory education project, which already had a rather extensive parent education component, tended to reduce interest in ESAA-sponsored activities. Thus, by broadening the recruitment base to include all parents, Winchester hoped to entice more participants to their ESAA workshops.

PARTICIPANTS AND NON-PARTICIPANTS

The number of participants in parent education activities ranged from a few to 130 at the four study sites. Even though most of these workshops were well attended (as can be seen in Table 7-1), it was generally found that parents played little or no role in determining the nature of such instructional activities. While they may have had some informal input into workshop proposals, it was the ESAA staff who primarily determined what the content would be.

Reasons offered for participating, by those parents who were interviewed, basically included the desire for personal growth and enrichment, as well as the wish to effectively communicate with their children. While some number of parents reportedly found the workshops to have been informative and beneficial, no specific outcomes were reported.

Reasons for non-participation were more general. We ran across a perception on the part of a few parents that the schools were running well without their involvement in parent education programs. Others claimed to feel a sense of alienation or hostility from school staff and thus preferred to disassociate themselves from any active participation. No other clear patterns were identifiable.

III. SCHOOL SUPPORT SERVICES

Within Chapter 6 of this report, we discussed the various ways in which parents assisted in ESAA instructional programs. In contrast, this section is designed to explore the non-instructional school support services that parents offer. In particular, we were interested in those activities or services that were provided in a systematic way or on a regular basis as part of the ESAA project. For example, parents might act as speakers in social studies classes, improve buildings and grounds, or raise funds for various school or extracurricular activities.

Six of the 12 study sites were found to have some school support activities in which ESAA parents could become involved; five had multiple ways for parents to lend their services. However, these school support services were generally rendered on an as-needed basis rather than in a systematic fashion. In other words, school support efforts tended not to be on-going, organized and programmatic in nature. The exception to this rule was Hare where ESAA parents were being asked to volunteer their time and talents in on-going support capacities.

As depicted in Table 7-2, parents involved in ESAA-sponsored school support assisted the program in one or more of the following ways: coordinating and chaperoning students on field trips; speaking in classrooms on their own personal histories, as part of attempts to further multicultural understanding; assisting at school assemblies with decorations and refreshments; making costumes and/or puppets for ESAA-sponsored school plays; coordinating school parties for students during holidays or other special occasions; and participating in letter-writing campaigns for the betterment of the schools or project.

In accounting for why ESAA-sponsored non-instructional support services were not rendered, even in an ad hoc fashion, at six sites, we were able to isolate one important factor. Five of the six sites without operable ESAA-sponsored non-instructional support services had viable school support programs that were sponsored by PTA groups or other Federal compensatory education programs. (No data existed for the sixth site.) Opportunities for parents within these non-ESAA programs were generally broad and varied, but included active fund raising and community building activities, which were of benefit to ESAA as well as non-ESAA students. For example, yearly fund raising carnivals at Newcastle helped to purchase needed equipment for the schools at large. Both ESAA and non-ESAA parents participated, and the students as a whole reaped the ensuing benefits.

Thus, it was probable that nearly half of the study sites did not have actual ESAA-sponsored non-instructional support services because other groups on site already had instituted well-organized, successful programs.

IV. COMMUNITY-SCHOOL RELATIONS

The community-school relations function encompassed two interrelated aspects of the interaction between a school or project and its community of served individuals--communication and interpersonal relations.

Extensive school-parent communication is particularly important for programs such as ESAA. Schools need to know the concerns, interests and desires of parents when designing and executing ESAA programs, and parents need to understand all aspects of the project in which their children are involved. A special problem within the low income and/or minority communities served by ESAA is to overcome the reluctance parents have felt to communicate with an institution which many view as unresponsive to their needs. Moreover, the problem is compounded by the perception of school personnel that such parents are often apathetic and/or hostile.

This section, then, deals with the efforts of districts, projects, and schools to effect the exchange of information between served parents and project staff. We found that such exchange occurs fundamentally in two ways: through interpersonal or two-way interactions between parents and staff, and through impersonal or one-way communication from staff to parents.

INTERPERSONAL INFORMATION EXCHANGE

Table 7-3 indicates that in the Site Study there was reasonable breadth in terms of interpersonal information exchange, although not much depth. Fully nine sites reported some form of such communication. However, the scope of the communication was limited at the majority of these sites. In other words, at most sites parental involvement in interpersonal exchanges lacked any real continuity; exchanges would occur periodically in a non-systematic fashion. For example, open house orientations would be planned for the beginning of the school year, or school assemblies addressing such issues as brotherhood between the races would be held once a year.

Activities of a more continuous nature that were designed to enhance personal or two-way interaction included: parent-teacher conferences, home visits and telephone calls by project staff, and informal networking via parent paraprofessionals. Parent-teacher conferences, which systematically provided opportunities for parents to discuss student progress or academic needs with the teachers, also on occasion provided general ESAA program information to parents, as well as reports concerning upcoming parent training workshops. Such activities were reported by two of the sites (Newcastle and Chesterfield). At several sites ESAA staff personally contacted parents in their homes either by telephone or in person. Although the Parent Coordinators were the primary initiators of such interaction, one site (Newcastle) reported that it was the ESAA counselors who handled the exchange of information with parents. Such exchanges often concerned student academic progress, general ESAA information, and the current social behavior of the child while at school. The interaction was especially valuable to those parents who rarely came to the school, but who wished nonetheless to voice their concerns about their child's progress or the project. For example, at Newcastle where all of the ESAA counselors were bilingual, they were able not only to discuss the formal aspects of the project but also to refer new families to needed social service agencies.

Finally, as already discussed in Chapter 6, some amount of interpersonal communication was carried out with parents by paid parent paraprofessionals. While the communication remained on an entirely informal footing at sites like Savin, it nonetheless afforded parents the opportunity of learning significant information from a knowledgeable, yet non-threatening, source.

ONE-WAY COMMUNICATION

This form of communication was confined to efforts on the part of districts, schools, and/or projects to keep parents informed of ESAA project purposes, activities, and events. The mechanisms by which sites disseminated information included the following:

- Media Announcements
- Newletters/Bulletins
- Notes/Letters/Flyers
- ESAA Information Workshops

Table 7-3 displays the site-by-site use of these mechanisms to achieve one-way communication. While eight of the Study Sites made some attempt to communicate to parents about project matters, two sites stood out in terms of utilizing varied mechanisms for one-way communication--Merchant and Savin. Both sites tended to use a combination of media announcements, newsletters and flyers to keep parents informed about ESAA events and issues. However, at Savin these efforts at one-way communication led to increased parental input into the communication network and fairly high levels of parent participation; at Merchant, communication remained largely one-way. The key factor in accounting for differentials in parent participation at these two sites seemed to center on the behaviors of key ESAA staff. The ESAA Project Coordinator at Savin was relentless in her reporting of ESAA and school information. Literally nothing related to the ESAA project seemed too small or irrelevant for public coverage. However, she also made Savin parents feel as though they were an important part of the project and had something significant to contribute in terms of their ideas and services. Indeed, parents were encouraged to share their ideas and opinions and to become actively involved in the project.

At Merchant, on the other hand, one-way communication to parents became an end in itself--that is, ESAA staff kept parents informed because it was their responsibility to do so. There was no sense in which this was expected to lead to real interaction in which a sharing of ideas, opinions, and services would go on. Everything tended to be controlled by the ESAA staff, i.e., program activities and communication.

V. DISCUSSION: CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES

In this section, we will present an analysis of those factors which seemed to account for the major findings in the three functional areas discussed in this chapter. Further, the consequences of parental involvement in these functional areas will be addressed. To reiterate, our analyses of both causes and consequences were severely limited by the thinness of our data. Rather than being able to make definitive statements based on strong patterns in the data across sites, we will base our comments on presumptive evidence emerging from the Site Study.

WHY DID ONLY ONE OF THE 12 STUDY SITES HAVE ACTIVITIES IN ALL THREE OF THE SUBJECT COMPONENTS?

Overall, we found very little meaningful activity in the areas of ESAA-sponsored parent education and school support, in particular. It is likely that the most important reason for this revolves around the lack of any mandate in the regulations for activity in either domain. As we have contended in other chapters of this report, ESAA personnel on site tended to take regulatory provisions quite seriously. In the case of school support and parent education, the absence of any mention in the regulations certainly affected the level of activity on-site. The reason that community-school relations were not similarly affected leads us to the next major finding and its probable cause.

WHY DID THE MAJORITY OF STUDY SITES PROVIDE A VARIETY OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVING COMMUNITY-SCHOOL RELATIONS, EVEN THOUGH THIS AREA WAS NOT MANDATED?

Although there were no guidelines established in the ESAA regulations for ESAA-sponsored activity in the community-school relations domain, the greater frequency of such activities at the Study Sites (compared to parent education and school support) is probably attributable to the fact that establishing lines of communication with the served population is a natural outgrowth of having any Federal program in operation. In other words, any district-level director of a Federal program is compelled, at very least, to disseminate information about services available through a program (what we have termed one-way communication). Thus, some amount of effort in the direction of improving community-school relations might be expected to be a structural feature of most ESAA projects.

WHY IS IT SIGNIFICANT THAT OF THE SIX STUDY SITES REPORTING NO ESAA-SPONSORED SCHOOL SUPPORT ACTIVITIES, EACH HAD A SUCCESSFUL NON-ESAA SPONSORED SUPPORT FUNCTION IN OPERATION?

Our data suggest that the lack of ESAA-sponsored school support activities at half of the sites was directly related to the presence of other non-ESAA-sponsored school support services. We found that, although such services were not sponsored by ESAA, they often stimulated the active participation of ESAA parents, with some benefits thereby accruing to ESAA students. For example, fund raising school carnivals (in which ESAA parents would help out) enabled a few districts to purchase needed school equipment for children; ESAA children were among the beneficiaries. Thus, the presence of already active school support programs in half of the districts eliminated the need for formation of similar ESAA-sponsored activities.

WHY DID PARENTS GENERALLY PLAY NO ROLE IN DETERMINING THE CONTENT OF ACTIVITIES OFFERED WITHIN THE REALMS OF PARENT EDUCATION, SCHOOL SUPPORT, OR COMMUNITY-SCHOOL RELATIONS?

The ESAA staff tended to both coordinate and make decisions about what activities would be offered within the three realms, thereby excluding the participation of parents in decision making. Attitudes held by both staff and parents seem to account for this state of affairs. At some sites, it was reported that ESAA staff (and some school administrators) simply did not value parental input into the formulation of project offerings enough to set up mechanisms to elicit such input. Essentially, communication was restricted to a one-way endeavor--i.e., staff keeping parents informed of project services. Parents at such sites naturally looked upon this as a clear-cut indication that ESAA staff did not wish to know the aims or concerns of the community in setting up activities in the three subject areas.

The attitudes of parents themselves also tended to play an important role in explaining why they did not insist on participating in formulating activities. Direct evidence from some sites (Hare, Bench, Newcastle) suggests that parents in urban areas particularly tend to participate in school or community activities when the issues are "hot," or of primary interest to the majority of the community. For example, when the issues involved teenage pregnancy or forced busing, parental participation and interest was high at these sites. When the issues revolved around parent education or school support, interest and concern slackened considerably.

Finally, there is one adjunct to the major findings which merits attention here. Despite the generally low levels of parental activity in the domains of school support, parent education, and community-school relations at sites in the Site Study, a number of sites did elicit parental participation in more than one of the domains. At the majority of such sites, some individual(s) was/were responsible for coordinating parental involvement and indeed had a major influence on the subject functional areas. Thus, there is reason to believe that staff involved in parent coordination played a significant role in initiating school support, parent education, and community-school relations at those sites where a fair amount of activity was underway.

OUTCOMES

Few consequences of parental involvement in the school support, parent education, or community-school relations domains were reported and none was replicated across sites. However, we will discuss briefly the positive outcomes realized at two sites.

Student interest and performance were spurred by the participation of parents in school support activities at Merchant. Respondents speculated that the positive attitudes exhibited by some of the students toward their studies and toward the school in general were a direct result of the participation by their parents.

Another outcome reported by the Merchant site concerned the participation by parents on ESAA-sponsored field trips. Principals there tended to set as a prerequisite for paid paraprofessional employment in the ESAA project prior involvement or participation by parents as chaperones on field trips or as members of the ESAA DAC. The principals employed only aides who had prior experience in school-related activities because they wanted to be assured of hiring quality workers. Therefore, if a parent systematically participated as a chaperone on field trips or attended DAC meetings, future employment as an ESAA-paid aide was more likely.

At Winchester, efforts at improving community-school relations on the part of the Parent Coordinator encouraged parents to request that more information about DAC and any future workshops be put in a formal newsletter. Increased information exchange and an ultimate rise in parental participation seem likely in the future.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

Since the three functional areas covered in this section appeared to have been operationally distinct from each other at the Study Sites, we believe that a more comprehensive approach would have enhanced the participation by parents in the three areas. While none of the areas could be termed overwhelmingly successful in terms of parent participation, perhaps by utilizing their collective resources in a coordinated effort, sites could have better realized heightened parental interest. And, such collective, systematic efforts would have served to expand the level of knowledge parents had about the project, and about the schools in general.

Second, we suggest, wherever possible, the employment of an ESAA Parent Coordinator at sites interested in increasing parent participation. As was mentioned previously under the discussion of causes and consequences, it is probable that the presence of Parent Coordinators served to initiate activity at a number of sites, especially in the areas of school support and community-school relations. Part of the problem for the majority of sites was that they had no individual to organize or coordinate parent activities, let alone recruit or encourage parents to attend them. Therefore, it would seem plausible that an individual assigned to assume these responsibilities would be in a position to affect change in terms of numbers of activities offered and levels of participation. Although parent apathy was reported as having been a contributor to low levels of involvement, consistently positive interaction by a Parent Coordinator serving in a liaison capacity could conceivably convince parents of their need to participate in project activities.

	BENCH	HARE	WINCHESTER	NEWCASTLE
PARENT INSTRUCTION: TOPICS AND SPONSORS	Parenting skills (project)	Parenting skills (project) Assertiveness training (project) Self-improvement, including arts/crafts/fitness (project) Communication workshops (project)	Parenting skills (project) Assertiveness training (project)	Parenting skills (project and district) Communication workshops (project and district)
RECRUITMENT	Notices sent home with students	No data	Formal, mailed announcements Personal contact	Formal, mailed announcements
CHARACTERISTICS OF PARENT PARTICIPANTS	All female; high involvement with schools, members of school parent council; White/Black	Mostly female, members of ESAA DAC, PTA, PTSO; Black	No data	Mostly female, some males at evening sessions; White/Hispanic
PARENT INSTRUCTION DECISION MAKERS	Parent Coordinators	District Parent Coordinator and school level Parent Coordinators	Parent Coordinator Community Activity Coordinators	ESAA Counselor; Project Director

Table 7-1. Parent Education Activities

	BENCH	HARE	WINCHESTER	NEWCASTLE	ALPINE	MERCHANT	WARD	CHESTER-FIELD	HARRISON	HANDOVER	WILLYSTON	SAVIN
TYPES UNDER ESAA	Chaperoning on field trips Letter writing Improve grounds	Chaperoning on field trips Clerical support Assist at school assemblies & holiday parties	None	None	None	Chaperoning on field trips Assist at school assemblies	Chaperoning on field trips Guest speakers in classrooms Assist at school assemblies	None	None	None	Chaperoning on field trips Assist at school assemblies	Chaperoning on field trips Assist at school assemblies Improve grounds
NON-ESAA SUPPORT ACTIVITIES IN PLACE	✓	None	✓	✓	✓	None	None	✓	None	No data	✓	None

LEGEND:
✓ = Yes, non-ESAA support activities in place.

Table 7-2. Parental Involvement in School Support

	BENCH	HARE	WINCHESTER	NEWCASTLE	ALPINE	MERCHANT	WARD	CHESTER-FIELD	HARRISON	HANDOVER	WILLYSTON	SAVIN
INTERPERSONAL EXCHANGES	Parent Coordinator as liaison	Parent Coordinator as liaison	Parent Coordinator as liaison	Outreach, home-school services Parent conferences ESAA counselors as liaisons	None	Outreach, home-school services Parent Coordinator as liaison	Special social events	ESAA Open House Parent conferences	Outreach, home-school services	Outreach, home-school services Parent Coordinator as liaison	None	Outreach, home-school services Special social events Community aides as liaisons
ONE-WAY COMMUNICATIONS	Newsletters	None	Newsletters Information workshops	Notes	None	Newsletters Notes Media announcements Handbooks	Newsletters	Notes	None	None	Newsletters Notes	Newsletters Notes Media announcements Information workshops

Table 7-3. Community-School Relations

CHAPTER 8

POLICY ISSUES FOR PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN ESAA

I. INTRODUCTION

A critical dimension of early work on the Study of Parental Involvement was the identification of policy-relevant issues that would guide the study. As an outcome of a review of literature on parents in the educational process, interviews with persons concerned with parental involvement, and interactions with the study's Policy Advisory Group, five issues were specified that could bear on Federal, state, and local policies. These issues were described in Working Paper No. 1, Policy-Relevant Issues and Research Questions, October, 1979 and outlined in Chapter 1 of this volume.

In this chapter we present our conclusions regarding the five policy-relevant issues. Each issue is taken up separately. The format for the presentations begins with a summary of the reasons behind the issue, then continues with a description of our major findings and analyses for the issue.

II. PARENTS IN THE GOVERNANCE ROLE

The major Congressional concern relative to parental involvement has been on parents actively participating in the governance of Federal educational programs through the medium of advisory groups. Congress' interest in a governance role for parents springs from the concept of participatory democracy--that persons whose lives are affected by a Federal program should have opportunities to participate in decisions about that program. Over the years, Congress has been increasingly specific in mandating a role for parent advisory groups in Federal program governance, including the ESAA program.

An analysis of the legislation for ESAA demonstrates that Congress has intended for parents to have a meaningful role in project governance. That is, parents are expected to participate in making potentially important decisions about the design, administration, and monitoring or projects.

There are a variety of viewpoints regarding parents and the governance role. On one hand, the argument has been made that current legislation, regulations, and customary practices are adequate to allow parents to enjoy significant participation in project governance. This position is taken by those who believe that broad mandates are sufficient, and that the right things will happen because of the good will of those involved. A contrary argument is that considerably more specificity and detail are needed in mandates if true participatory democracy is to be realized, because entrenched interest groups will not give up power to others unless they are required to do so.

In this study, we approached the following policy-relevant issues in the area of project governance:

- Do existing Federal and state legislation, regulations, and guidelines allow parents to participate in making important project decisions?

- Do existing state and local practices affect parental participation in the making of important project decisions?

MAJOR FINDINGS

The Site Study examined the nature and extent of parental involvement in decisions about both the planning and implementation of the project. We focused primarily on District-wide Advisory Committees (DACs), but also sought information on the influence of individual parents and of other groups or organizations. Our major findings were:

1. Parents, acting as individuals, did not influence ESAA project governance.

2. Neither advisory groups for other educational programs nor noneducational organizations had any influence directly or indirectly (i.e., through representatives serving on DACs) on ESAA project governance.

3. No DACs at Site Study sites could be regarded as real decision-/policy-making bodies. Most played a minor role in the process of project decision making, while a few had major roles.

ANALYSES

Our analytical procedures were driven, in large part, by the questions posed in the policy-relevant issues. More specifically, we were interested in determining the effects of legislation, regulations, and current practices on parental participation through DACs in ESAA project governance.

While existing legislation and regulations established a potential mechanism (i.e., DACs) by which parents could participate in making significant project decisions, the lack of precision in their language did not serve to encourage or facilitate such involvement. The amorphous language of Federal legislation and regulations allowed almost any actions of a DAC to be construed as consistent with the fundamental mandate. In fact, as already noted, we avoided labeling any of our site DACs as "out of compliance" with Federal regulations, because, except for composition requirements, the regulations lend themselves to varying interpretations and subsequent activities.

At those four sites where DACs did participate in a major way in project governance, we discovered that there were local practices which seemed to have had considerable impact. These practices arrayed themselves into four critical areas. First, when a district or project worked to define carefully a role for the DAC in the process of decision making, then the DAC tended to have greater involvement. Second, when steps had been taken to improve the visibility of the DAC--through more extensive communication with the community/school environment--the DAC, having renewed credibility as a representative body, was more active. Third, systematic training had been provided for each of the most involved DACs. (The exception to this rule occurred at a site where most of the active parent members were veterans on the DAC and didn't need training.) Finally, each of the most active DACs had an ESAA staff person who took responsibility for facilitating/coordinating its activities without dominating the group.

III. PARENTS IN THE EDUCATIONAL ROLE

A second way in which parental involvement is manifested is through an educational role, with parents directly involved with the instructional process. Parents can participate in this educational role as paid instructional aides or volunteers, or as tutors of their own children at home. Many parents are involved with the educational role; probably more participate in projects this way than through a governance role.

There are differences of opinion regarding the place of parents in the instructional process. Among the detractors, two arguments are offered. The primary one is that instruction is the rightful province of trained professionals, and parents at best only interfere with (and at worst are actually detrimental to) improving student performance. A second argument offered by some detractors is that any home tutoring program is necessarily unfair because many students will not have parents who can provide them with effective instruction at home. Supporters of a place for parents in the instructional process suggest that parents are closer than professionals to students' home lives and cultures and therefore can be effective in meeting the needs of individual students. They also sometimes argue that through day-to-day interaction with school personnel, parent aides and volunteers can influence schools to provide higher quality education for students. Finally, some supporters note that parent aides and volunteers are an inexpensive way to reduce the student/adult ratio, so that the opportunities for individual assistance to students are enhanced.

The policy-relevant issues we addressed in the educational area were:

- Do existing Federal and state legislation, regulations, and guidelines allow parents to participate meaningfully in the instructional process?

- Do existing state and local practices affect meaningful parental participation in instruction?

MAJOR FINDINGS

The Site Study investigated three ways by which parents can participate in an ESAA project's instructional processes: as paid paraprofessionals, as instructional volunteers, and as teachers of their own children at home. We found the following:

1. Only five of the 12 ESAA sites had parents acting as aides. At each of these sites parents had instructional duties, but in general they did not participate in instructional planning decisions.

2. Few concerted attempts were made by LEAs to hire parents *per se* for ESAA aide positions.

3. There were no instructional volunteer programs.

4. The vast majority of sites placed no emphasis on utilizing parents as teachers of their own children (home tutors).

ANALYSES

The legislation and regulations concerning ESAA had little to say about parental involvement in the instructional process. Two of the components examined in the Site Study--volunteers and home tutoring--were not mentioned at all in the regulations. With respect to paid aides, there was no requirement that parents be employed in these positions, but there was a stipulation that perferences be given to parents in the event that an LEA wanted to use paid aides in its ESAA project.

We found that most districts had policies and practices which effectively stood in the way of meaningful participation for parents in the ESAA instructional process. First, the majority of districts did not make conscious attempts to recruit parents for *paid aide* jobs, despite the spirit of the ESAA regulations. (However, the mechanisms by which persons were recruited at some sites did tend to favor parents.) Second, the involvement of ESAA Project Directors with the paid aides was minimal; the Project Directors did not serve as advocates for the component, as was the case with the most involved DACs. Third, no mechanisms were established whereby parent aides could have input into planning decisions regarding the design/implementation of a project's instructional services; further, few parent aides were given the opportunity to participate in real decision making with respect to classroom activities.

At those sites where parent aides were participating meaningfully in the ESAA instructional process, our analyses suggested that there were local practices that had considerable positive impact. Recognizing that parents cannot necessarily be expected to have adequate amounts of experience in actually teaching youngsters, these sites provided a good deal of pre- and in-service training activities for aides. In addition, these sites set up many opportunities for parent aides to communicate formally and informally among themselves, with teachers, and with other professional staff. As a result, paid aides became informed and valued members of the school staff.

We discovered three primary reasons (beyond the lack of any regulatory requirement) which seemed to account for the absence of any instructional volunteers in ESAA projects. First, long established, non-ESAA volunteer programs existed, causing many sites to see no need for more parent volunteers. Second, some respondents claimed that parent volunteerism in general was being diminished because of the economy, which had forced many parents back to work. Third, some districts chose not to have a volunteer program because they perferred hiring aides to do equivalent work.

In trying to account for the lack of home tutoring in ESAA projects, we found that most projects had not even considered this as a mechanism for parental involvement. For those that had entertained home tutoring possibilities, serious district and ESAA budget cutbacks were the reasons given most often as to why home tutoring programs were not developed.

IV. FUNDING CONSIDERATIONS AND PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Conventional wisdom holds that the types and amounts of services included in an operational project should be influenced by the level of funding received by that project. It is a simple extension of this argument to predict that parental involvement activities would be affected by funding levels. However, there has not been complete consensus on the possible interaction between funding level and project services. While some persons have held that more extensive parental involvement activities are found in projects with greater amounts of funds available to them, others believe that the extent to which parental involvement activities go on is less related to funding level than it is to attitudes and practices of educational personnel and parents.

A second funding consideration bears on the timing of funding allocations, and the duration of the funding. It is possible that late receipt of ESAA funds, and a single-year funding cycle, operated to reduce the effective implementation of parental invovement activities. On the other hand, it can be argued that a well-developed parental involvement component in a project would not be unduly constrained by late funding or one-year funding.

One other funding consideration was suggested to us--the amount of a project's budget specifically devoted to parental involvement. This consideration involves the extent to which designated parental involvement funding relates to parental involvement activities.

In our study we collected information on the size of the ESAA grant, the total amount of money provided to the district from all sources, the timing and duration of ESAA grants, and the designation of money in the grant for parental involvement. With this information we attempted to address the following policy-relevant questions:

- Do total funding levels affect the quantity and quality of parental involvement activities?

- Do the timing and duration of grants influence parental involvement activities?

- Does the amount of funding specifically devoted to parental involvement affect parental involvement activities?

MAJOR FINDINGS

We found that total funding level--either in terms of the ESAA grant or the overall amount of money available to the district--did not show any systematic relationship to the quantity or quality of ESAA parental involvement. We also discovered that the timing and duration of ESAA grants did not appear to affect parental involvement. Finally, the nature of our data made it impossible to relate funds specifically designated for parental involvement to the quantity/quality of parental involvement activities.

ANALYSES

Neither grant size nor total district wealth bore any relationship to the proportion of parents who were active in a project, the range of a project's parental involvement activities, or the effectiveness of these activities. For example, one of the wealthiest sites (in terms of both grant size and district wealth) had virutally no ESAA-sponsored activities for parental participation, outside of some minor DAC involvement in the governance of the project. Conversely, one of the poorest sites on both measures offered probably the greatest variety of effective parental involvement activities.

Since ESAA grants were received at about the same time, and for the same lenghts of time, by most of the Site Study projects, it was not possible to identify any relationship between those variables and parental involvement. Most ESAA sites received their grants within a short range of time, so we could not determine whether early receipt had a differential impact from late receipt.

Districts in the Site Study tended to employ such widely different accounting systems that it became very difficult to identify ESAA funds earmarked especially for parental involvement. For example, not all districts included costs associated with the DAC as part of their parental involvement allocations. As another example, at Merchant, most of the parental involvement allocation went to salaries for paid parent aides; at Chesterfield, also employing parents as aides, salaries were included under instructional expenses. In sum, despite our best efforts, we were not able to obtain precise, comparable information on project expenditures for parental involvement at enough locations to allow systematic analyses of the effect of direct funding.

V. MULTIPLE FUNDING AND PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Most school districts are participating in more than one program that calls for parental involvement. There are numerous Federal educational programs, and some state programs, that include parental involvement components. It is of some concern to ESAA personnel that the relationship among different projects, being implemented side-by-side, be examined with regard to parental involvement.

It is possible that the occurrence of parallel projects has a salubrious effect, with the natural interaction among parents involved with different projects resulting in each stimulating and learning from the other. Alternatively, it is possible that the requirements for different advisory groups, along with the different concerns of parents, siphon time from parent leaders and school administrators, as well as create conflicts among both parents and educators.

In this study, we addressed the following policy-relevant issue:

- When multiple programs are funded at a site, are the quantity and quality of parental involvement activities affected?

MAJOR FINDINGS

ESAA project's parental involvement components were relatively unaffected by other programs' activities. The only observable impact occurred in the instructional volunteer realm. Moreover, ESAA projects seldom seem to influence the parental involvement activities of other programs. Finally, we discovered little interfacing or coordination of parental involvement activities across ESAA and other programs.

ANALYSES

The major ESAA parental involvement components were, on the whole, not influenced by other programs operating at the district or school levels. For example, ESAA DACs took exclusive care of whatever parental participation there was in ESAA project governance; our data suggest that no decisions for ESAA projects were made by advisory groups for other programs. The one noteworthy exception to this rule occurred in the instructional volunteer realm. The impact there of other programs was twofold. First, the existence of other long-standing volunteer programs caused some ESAA projects not to consider volunteerism as a viable mechanism for ESAA parental involvement. Second, participation in volunteer efforts for other programs frequently became a proving ground for some ESAA parents, who were then hired as ESAA paid aides.

Examining ESAA impact on other program's parental involvement activities, we discovered no significant instances in our data of this phenomenon.

When we studied the potential interfacing of parental involvement activities across ESAA and other programs, we found that ESAA DACs had mininal contact with the district advisory groups for other programs. There were scattered examples of overlapping membership (i.e., the same parents serving on more than one advisory group), but this overlap did not result in the different governing bodies sharing information or coordinating their activities. In addition, we had one case in which a DAC served as both a Title I and ESAA advisory committee; the membership was synonymous but the officers changed depending on which business was being transacted.

In the other functional areas, we also saw little real integration of ESAA parental involvement activities with those of other programs.

VI. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AND EDUCATIONAL QUALITY

The legislation for ESAA does not offer a clear rationale for parental involvement. However, it is possible to deduce that the principal reason for parental involvement is the expectation that it will result in an improvement in the quality of education offered to students who are recipients of ESAA services. Our literature review and interviews with informed persons suggested four ways in which parents can affect the quality of education:

1. Principally through advisory committees, but also through less formal interactions with project personnel, parents can influence the design, administration, and evaluation of project services offered to students.

2. What is taught (curriculum) and how (instruction) in an ESAA project can be affected by advisory committees, parent aides and volunteers, and individual parents.

3. Parents can provide, to an ESAA project, overt support (such as volunteering to accompany students on a field trip) and covert support (such as, instilling positive attitudes in their children toward education).

4. By the manner in which they interact with project personnel and perhaps with each other, parents can influence the climate of a project school.

Some of the arguments concerning parental involvement cited in the discussions of other policy issues indicate that there is not perfect agreement on parental involvement and educational quality. Some persons hold that all important educational matters should be left to the professionals without interference from laypersons. (This view is not unique to professionals. There are parents who share it: proportionately, however, there are more educators than parents who hold this view.) Contrarily, people who believe in the participatory democracy notion feel that parent participation in ESAA will enhance the quality of project services.

The policy-relevant issue we addressed was:

- Do parental involvement activities influence the quality of educational services provided to ESAA students?

MAJOR FINDINGS

Overall, we did not find a pattern (across sites and across parental involvement functions) of parents having an identifiable impact on the quality of education provided students served by ESAA projects. We did, of course, find instances, noted throughout this volume, of parents who had had considerable influence on ESAA educational services; however, these instances were too rare to lead us to assert that parental involvement, as we examined it in the Site Study, made a difference in the educational lives of youngsters.

ANALYSES

As already indicated, parents, as members of advisory committees or as individuals, did not on the whole participate actively in the governance of ESAA projects. Consequently, parents tended to have little impact on the design, administration, or evaluation of project services.

We also pointed out earlier that parent aides, across all sites, did not tend to have input into decisions that were made about instruction. Therefore, parents tended not to affect a project's educational services or instructional methods, except as assistants in delivering the services.

We did find some instances in which parents offered support to ESAA projects. However, these activities were not extensive, systematic, or well-organized, and they seldom constituted integral elements of projects.

There were reportedly frequent attempts at improving relations between ESAA project schools and served parents. These attempts were centered both on one-way communication from project to parents and on face-to-face interaction between project staff and parents. However, we were unable to generate any clear-cut evidence that these activities for improving community-school relations had any material effect on school climate.

VII. CONCLUSIONS

Our policy suggestions throughout this volume have been predicated on the belief that well-conceived and implemented parental involvement activities can be beneficial both for ESAA projects and for participating parents. It would be unreasonable to offer suggestions to policy makers on how to enhance parental involvement in areas like governance and the instructional process, as we have done, unless there was evidence that the participation of parents had real payoffs.

A reader of this volume cannot help but be struck by the variability in both the nature and extent of parental involvement across the 12 ESAA sites. At many sites, there was little meaningful parental involvement, and it was confined to one or two of our functional areas. However, we did study a handful of sites where parents were taking a major hand in the governance of projects or in providing instructional services, and were, in the process, having a definite impact on the quality of those enterprises. Moreover, one ESAA site distinguished itself through both the quality and quantity of its parental involvement activities. This site was Savin. Data from Savin yielded strong presumptive evidence that a genuine commitment to encouraging parents to assume significant roles in an ESAA project and to supporting parents in carrying out these roles can have positive payoffs, not only in the realms of project governance and instruction but also in the overall quality of educational services offered to ESAA students.

Indeed, it is the vitality and effectiveness of parental activities at Savin (or of parental participation in Governance at Beach and in the Instructional Process at Chesterfield) that lead us to conclude that making suggestions to Federal and local policy makers on ways of improving parental participation is a valuable exercise. In sum, we believe, based on our Site Study information, that the kind of intense, rewarding parental involvement found at a few of the sites was not the product of a set of fortuitous, idiosyncratic circumstances. Given an appropriate set of concrete actions, which we have attempted to present throughout the volume, meaningful parental involvement, and the subsequent benefits that accrue to the project and its students, are within the grasp of most ESAA projects.

APPENDIX
TECHNICAL DETAILS OF THE STUDY

The Study of Parental Involvement in Four Federal Education Programs has been designed to provide a systematic exploration of parental participation in the educational process. The Study has consisted of two substudies--the Federal Programs Survey and the Site Study. A previous volume reported in detail the findings from the Federal Programs Survey. The present volume is devoted to the Site Study findings. However, in order for the reader to fully understand these findings, we feel it is necessary to present an overview of the purposes and methods employed in both substudies.

Accordingly, this Appendix contains three parts. Part I is an introduction to parental involvement in Federal programs and a delineation of the design and purposes of the overall Study. Part II discusses briefly the Federal Programs

Survey and, in particular, its relationship to the Site Study. Finally Part III affords the reader a closer look at the instrumentation, data collection, and analysis procedures associated with the Site Study, thereby providing a substantial background for the findings presented in this volume.

I. OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

THE ROOTS OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN FEDERAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

During the past decade parental participation has come to play an increasingly important role in the educational process. The concept of parental involvement in Federal education programs has its roots in the Community Action Program of the Economic Opportunities Act of 1964 (EOA), administered by the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO). One intent of the EOA was to promote community action to increase the political participation of previously excluded citizens, particularly members of ethnic minority groups, and to provide them with a role in the formation of policies and the making of decisions that had the potential to affect their lives (Peterson and Greenstone, 1977.) More specifically, the EOA required that poverty programs be developed with the "maximum feasible participation of the residents of areas and the members of the groups served."

As applied to education, the maximum feasible participation requirement has been interpreted quite broadly. One manifestation has been the requirement that parents of children being served become members of policy-making groups. EOA's Head Start Program was the first Federal education program to address the concern of maximum feasible participation by instituting such groups. In addition to decision-making (governance) roles, Head Start also provided opportunities for parents of served children to become involved as paid staff members in Head Start centers and as teachers of their own children at home. Other Federal education programs have tended to follow the lead of Head Start in identifying both governance and direct service roles for parents in the educational process. In fact, participation by parents in Federal education programs has been stipulated in the General Education Provisions Act (Sec. 427), which calls for the Commissioner of Education to establish regulations encouraging parental participation in any program for which it is determined that such participation would increase the effectiveness of the program.

The Study of Parental Involvement has been designed to examine parental involvement components of four Federal education programs: ESEA Title I, ESEA Title VII Bilingual, Emergency School Aid Act (ESAA), and Follow Through. While there are differences in the legislation, regulations, and guidelines pertaining to each of the four programs, all of them derive their emphasis upon parental/community participation from the General Education Provisions Act. Because these programs differ in terms of intent, target populations, and mandated parental involvement, they provide a rich source of information on the subject of the study.

RESEARCH INTO PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

The present study takes on added significance in light of the paucity of prior research directed to the nature and consequences of parental involvement. Despite the increasing opportunities provided to parents and other community members to influence the educational process, little systematic information has been available on the role parents actually play in designing and/or delivering educational services associated with Federal programs. While prior evaluations of each of the four subject programs have included some attention to parental involvement, none has addressed this aspect of the program in a focused, in-depth fashion. For example, studies conducted by the American Institute for Research for Title VII Bilingual (1978), System Development Corporation for ESAA (1976, 1978), Nero Associates for Follow Through (1976), and System Development Corporation for Title I (1970) all reported some *limited* information touching on parental involvement within the subject program.

The exception to this pattern treating parental involvement as a subsidiary concern was a series of NIE-sponsored studies whose primary focus was Title I district- and school-level advisory groups. The results of four of these studies were presented in an NIE (1978) report to Congress, while the fifth was conducted by CPI associates during the spring of 1978. But even this series of studies had definite limitations in scope. They were essentially exploratory in nature; the types of parental involvement examined were limited to district and school Parent Advisory Councils; the participation of parents as aides and volunteers, the tutoring that parents provide their own children at home, and parent-school liaison personnel were not included in the examinations. Finally, little can be determined about the factors that influence Title I PACs or the consequences of PAC functions from these studies. These are two vital areas, as will be seen, in the present Study. Thus, for each of the four subject programs in the Study of Parental Involvement, the research can be said to have produced scattered findings that are more provocative than definitive.

Going beyond evaluations of the four subject Federal programs, there are numerous studies that have been concerned with aspects of parental involvement specifically or have included considerations of parental involvement. Three recent reviews are available that summarize findings from different studies (Chong, 1976; Center for Equal Education, 1977; Gordon, 1978). These reviews provided considerable information to help shape the Study of Parental Involvement (e.g., insight into what types of parental involvement appear to make a difference in the educational process), but in and of themselves the studies reported therein were much too narrowly focused to be generalized to the four Federal programs.

PURPOSES FOR THE STUDY OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

As the above review indicates, previous studies do not provide systematic, nationally representative information on parental involvement in Federal education programs. To fill this gap in knowledge, the U.S. Education Department (ED) issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a study which would achieve two broad goals:

1. To obtain an accurate description of the form and extent of parental involvement in Federal education programs and, for each identified form or participatory role, to identify factors which seem to facilitate or prevent parents from carrying out these roles.

2. To study the feasibility of disseminating information about effective parental involvement.

In response to this RFP, System Development Corporation (SDC) proposed a study which included these major objectives:

1. DESCRIBE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

The first objective is to provide detailed descriptions of parental involvement in terms of three categories of information:

a. Types and levels of parental involvement activities, and the extent to which each activity occurs

b. Characteristics of participants and non-participants in parental involvement activities, including both parents and educators

c. Costs associated with parental involvement activities

2. IDENTIFY CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS

The second objective is to identify factors that facilitate the conduct of parental involvement activities and factors that inhibit such activities, and to ascertain the relative contributions of these factors to specific activities, and to parental involvement in general.

3. DETERMINE CONSEQUENCES

The third study objective is to determine the direction and degree of the outcomes of parental involvement activities. Included in this task are outcomes of specific activities as well as outcomes of parental involvement in general.

4. SPECIFY SUCCESSFUL STRATEGIES

Based on findings concerning parental involvement activities, their contributory factors, and their outcomes, strategies which have been successful in enhancing parental involvement at one or more sites will be specified.

5. PROMULGATE FINDINGS

The fifth objective is to produce reports and handbooks on parental involvement for project implementors, program administrators, and Congress.

The objectives cited above were translated into a set of research questions intended to guide the Study of Parental Involvement. Answers to these questions ought to provide a firm foundation for decision making at the Congressional, program office, and local levels. The six global research questions identified were:

- What is the nature of parental involvement?
- Who does, and who does not participate in parental involvement?
- What monetary costs are associated with parental involvement?
- What factors influence parental involvement activities?
- What are the consequences of parental involvement?
- Are there identifiable strategies which have been successful in promoting and/or carrying out parental involvement activities?

DESIGN OF THE OVERALL STUDY

The design of any study the size of the Study of Parental Involvement is a complex and painstaking task. We will only briefly summarize the design tasks undertaken to achieve the purposes of the Study, as presented in the last section. First, during the planning phase of the study, a conceptual framework for parental involvement was established and a set of policy issues was specified. Then, two substudies were designed and implemented. First, the Federal Programs Survey was developed to collect "quantitative" descriptive data on formal parental involvement activities from a sample of districts and schools representative of each of the programs on a nationwide basis. Second, the Site Study was created to explore in a more qualitative, in-depth fashion the contributory factors and consequences of parental involvement, as well as the more informal and site-specific parental involvement activities. (The Site Study findings are, to reiterate, the subject of this volume.)

The remainder of Part I of this Appendix will discuss the primary features of the conceptual framework established for the Study of Parental Involvement, while Parts II and III will be devoted to the Federal Programs Survey and Site Study respectively.

CONCEPTUALIZATION OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

During the planning phase of the Study, a conceptualization of parental involvement was developed; in conjunction with the conceptualization, a series of policy issues were specified. Both of these tasks were conducted on the basis of information which included extensive reviews of the literature on parental involvement, examinations of legislation and regulations for the four Federal programs, suggestions from study advisory group members, the personal experiences of project staff members, and interviews with representatives of each of the three major audiences for the study. (The latter encompasses

Congress, Federal program administrators, and local implementors of parental involvement.) Although the two tasks were interrelated, we will discuss each separately for the sake of clarity.

In order to realize the objectives of the study, a conceptualization of parental involvement was developed. It can be summarized by the statement:

> Given that certain preconditions are satisfied, parental involvement functions are implemented in varying ways, depending upon particular contextual factors, and produce certain outcomes.

Five major elements are embedded in this statement. These elements, which comprise the conceptualization that guides the study, are outlined briefly below.

FUNCTIONS

Five parental involvement functions were identified. The functions are:

- Parental participation in project governance
- Parental participation in the instructional process
- Parental involvement in non-instructional support services for the school
- Communication and interpersonal relations among parents and educators
- Educational offerings for parents

Preconditions

These are the conditions that must be satisfied in order for parental involvement activities to take place. They are necessary for the implementation of a function, in that a function cannot exist if any of the preconditions is not met. For instance, one precondition is that there be some parents willing to engage in the function.

Context

Parental involvement activities take place within an environment that contributes to the manner and degree of their operationalization and potentially to their effectiveness. Systematic examinations of these contextual factors may allow for a determination of which of these contribute to parental involvement, in what ways, and to what degrees. As an example, one contextual factor of potential importance is a community's history of citizen involvement with social programs.

Implementation

When a particular parental involvement function is carried out, there are a number of variables that help to portray the process of implementation. Through these variables, activities can be described in terms of participants, levels of participation, and costs. One variable that exemplifies implementation is the decision-making role of the advisory council.

Outcomes

Parental involvement activities can lead to both positive and negative consequences, for both institutions and individuals. Examinations of these outcomes will provide the information needed for decisions about what constitutes effective parental involvement practices.

SPECIFICATION OF POLICY-RELEVANT ISSUES

Policy-relevant issues were specified in five areas. Providing information on these issues should be of special value to decision makers who can influence legislation, program operations, and project implementation.

Parental Involvement in Governance

This area covers parental participation in the planning of projects, in ongoing decision making about projects, and in evaluating projects. The policy issues within the governance realm are:

- Do existing Federal and state legislation, regulations, and guidelines allow parents to participate in making important decisions?
- Do existing state and local practices affect parental participation in the making of important decisions?

Parental Involvement in the Instructional Process

The second area is concerned with parental participation in instruction, as paid or volunteer paraprofessionals within the school or as tutors of their own children at home. The specific issues related to the instructional process are:

- Do existing Federal and state legislation, regulations, and guidelines allow parents to participate meaningfully in educational roles?
- Do existing state and local practices affect meaningful parental participation in educational roles?

Funding Considerations and Parental Involvement

Policy issues within the third area explore the relationship between funding considerations and the conduct of parental involvement activities. These issues are:

- Do total funding levels affect the quantity and quality of parental involvement activities?

- Do the timing and duration of fund allocations influence the quantity and quality of parental involvement activities?

- Does the amount of funding specifically devoted to parental involvement affect the quantity and quality of parental involvement activities?

Parental Involvement and Educational Quality

The fourth area of concern is the quality of education offered to students who are recipients of program services. The policy issue is:

- Do parental involvement activities influence the quality of education provided to students served by the four Federal programs?

Multiple Funding and Parental Involvement

The final area addresses the situation in which a district or a school is participating in more than one program that calls for parental involvement. The issue of relevance in such a situation is:

- When multiple programs are funded at a site, are the quantity and quality of parental involvement activities affected?

II. THE FEDERAL PROGRAMS SURVEY

Two broad purposes guided the development of the Federal Programs Survey (FPS). First, it was intended to provide nationwide projections of the nature and extent of parental involvement activities in districts and schools that have projects funded by one or more of the subject programs. Second, the FPS was to provide the information needed to establish a meaningful sampling design for the Site Study. This section will merely touch on some of the features of FPS sampling, instrumentation, and data collection. The reader interested in details about FPS methodology and/or findings is encouraged to review the FPS report entitled Parents and Federal Education Programs: Some Preliminary Findings from the Study of Parental Involvement.

Four independent samples of districts (and schools within those districts) were drawn (using a two-stage process detailed in the FPS report) to achieve a national representation of participating schools within each of the four target programs. Separate district-level and school-level questionnaires were constructed for ESAA, Title I, and Title VII. In light of Follow Through's organizational structure, a project-level and school-level questionnaire were developed.

With two exceptions (discussed below), questionnaires for all four programs addressed the same broad content areas. At the district (or project) level, those were:

1. Background information
2. Supervision/coordination of parental involvement activities
3. District level advisory councils

At the school level, they were:

1. Background information
2. Paid paraprofessionals
3. Volunteers

4. Parents as teachers for their own children
5. Coordination/promotion of parental involvement activities
6. School funding

The Title I school-level questionnaire also contained a separate section on school-level advisory councils to reflect the Title I mandate for such school-level councils. The ESAA district-level and school-level questionnaire each included a section addressing ESAA-funded Non-profit Organizations.

The Federal Programs Survey was conducted during April and May of 1979. A mail-and-telephone data collection procedure was employed to ensure quality data and a high response rate. Copies of the appropriate forms were sent to the liaison person in each district, who most often was the director of the subject Federal program. This person was requested to fill out the district-level questionnaire and to assign the school-level questionnaires to the program staff member(s) best acquainted with project operations at the selected schools. A trained SDC representative called (at a time convenient for the respondent) to record responses to the questionnaires.

Once the data were recorded, each questionnaire was thoroughly reviewed by an SDC staff member in order to identify any inconsistencies or omissions. Follow-up calls were made to remedy these deficiencies.

The mail-and-telephone method provided respondents with time to gather the information needed to complete the questionnaire before the telephone interviews. It also allowed SDC staff members to assist respondents with questions they found ambiguous or unclear. Because of the review and call-back process, instances of missing data or logically inconsistent information were rare. Finally, the procedure generally insures a very high response rate. In particular, response rates of 96 percent were obtained at both the district level (286 out of 299 sampled districts) and the school level (869 out of 908 sampled schools). For all of these reasons, we are confident that the quality of data collected in the FPS was extremely high.

III. THE SITE STUDY

PURPOSES

The Site Study was conceptualized as an in-depth investigation of parental involvement which would provide information extending far beyond the descriptions of formal program components derived from the Federal Programs Survey. More specifically, four types of information were to be obtained:

1. Detailed descriptions of parental involvement functions, including governance and education functions in all cases, and other functions wherever they occur.

2. Informal aspects of parental involvement; that is, ways in which parents participate in addition to formal project components.

3. Factors which enhance or deter the participation of parents in Federal education programs, and/or influence the extent of their impact on program operations or outcomes.

4. Consequences of parental participation, both for the participants themselves and for the programs and institutions within which they operate.

OVERVIEW OF THE SITE STUDY

To satisfy the above purposes, intensive, on-site data collection efforts, employing a variety of data sources and a substantial period of time, were demanded. To meet these demands, experienced Field Researchers who lived in the immediate vicinity of each sampled site were employed and trained by SDC. They remained on-site for a period of 16 weeks, on a half-time basis, collecting information from the LEA and two participating schools. Three data

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collection techniques were used by the Field Researchers: interviews, observations, and document analyses. Their data collection efforts were guided by a set of "analysis packets" which contained detailed descriptions of the research questions to be explored and the appropriate techniques to employ. Information gathered on-site was submitted to SDC on a regular basis, in the form of taped protocols and written forms on which specific data were recorded. Each Field Researcher worked with a senior SDC staff member who served as a Site Coordinator, providing guidance and direction as necessary. Toward the end of the data collection period, all Field Researchers were asked to do a series of summary protocols which called for them to analyze their data, with the assistance of the Site Coordinators, for the purposes of answering major questions of substantive interest. These summary protocols became critical elements in the multi-step analysis procedures carried out by staff at SDC.

METHODOLOGY

Within this section, various aspects of the Site Study methodology are discussed: sampling, hiring and training of Field Researchers, data collection techniques, instrumentation, data reporting, and analyses.

SAMPLE DESIGN

As was the case for the FPS, samples for the Site Study were drawn independently for the four Federal programs. Within each program, the goal was to select districts and schools that exhibited greater and lesser degrees of parental involvement--defined as involvement in governance and education functions, as determined by the FPS. In addition to degree of parental involvement, the sample took into account the urbanicity of districts and the number of programs from which the district was receiving funds. Each sample was drawn using a two-step process. First, districts were selected for participation. Then, two elementary schools within each district were selected. (Four districts were exceptions to this procedure since, for each, there was only one elementary school participating in the project. For these districts, then, the site consisted of the district (or project) office and the single participating elementary school.) The Site Study was intended to investigate approximately 50 districts and 100 schools. To account for projected losses of districts--due to problems with data collection--a 25 percent oversample was used. Thus, 62 districts were chosen for the initial sample: 15 each in the ESAA and Title VII Bilingual programs, and 16 each in Title I and Follow Through. Due to problems in securing final district approval and/or locating Field Researchers that met all our criteria, the final sample included 57 sites.

Given the fact that the sample for the Site Study was purposefully designed to yield a number of relatively active and relatively inactive sites, one must avoid generalizing percentages or averages from this small sample to the entire population of districts and schools receiving services from a particular Federal program.

HIRING OF FIELD RESEARCHERS

An intensive recruitment and hiring effort was conducted to ensure that qualified Field Researchers would be located at each site. A description of the Field Researcher's duties and qualifications was prepared and sent to appropriate individuals at organizations such as research firms, colleges, universities, community groups and school districts located near selected sites. Approximately 700 job descriptions were sent and we received approximately 200 resumes from prospective candidates. SDC staff members then visited sites, conducting personal interviews with all candidates whose resumes passed an initial screening process. For those sites at which an insufficient number of viable candidates was located prior to the staff member's visit, an attempt was made to locate and interview additional candidates during the course of the trip. In a few instances, interviews with additional candidates were conducted from SDC via telephone. And, for two sites in remote locations for which personal visits were unfeasible, the entire selection process was conducted via written and telephonic communication.

Qualifications for the Field Researcher position included a background in the social sciences, research experience, and some experience in working with school districts and, in some instances, fluency in a second language. In addition, for several sites, school district personnel required that Field Researchers be of particular racial or ethnic backgrounds. Despite our intensive recruitment effort, this combination of criteria resulted in our being unable to find satisfactory candidates in two sites. These sites were therefore dropped from the sample.

INSTRUMENTATION

In designing the Site Study instrumentation, one of our major goals was that the information to be gathered provide accurate, detailed descriptions of the full range of program-related activities at each site--no matter how unusual those activities might be. While providing for the investigation of site-specific program chracteristics, we wanted to ensure that a core of data about common program activities be gathered in a comparable way across sites. Further, we wanted to make sure that the Site Study would explore, in depth, both the relationships among parental involvement activities and relationships among these activities, various contextual factors, and valued outcomes. In addition to these substantive considerations, we attempted to minimize to the extent possible the burden that this intensive data collection effort would place on respondents at each site.

We realized that to achieve these goals, we did not want Field Researchers to go out into district offices and schools armed with a set of formal interview questionnaires and observation protocols. Such a tightly-structured approach requires that the researcher make numerous assumptions about what parental involvement activities are going on in the field and which of these activities are most important. Further, the researcher must presume to be able to word questions in a manner that will take into account regional, educational, and socio-economic differences. Given our goals and our unwillingness to make such assumptions, we have developed a unique approach to instrumentation. Basically, the approach entails the use of four sets of "analysis packets"; one tailored to each of the four target programs, to guide Field Researchers in their data collection efforts. These analysis packets, each of which addresses a particular research issue of concern to the Study, employ three data collection techniques--interviews, observations, and document analyses. These data collection techniques and the analysis packet approach are described in detail below.

Data Collection Techniques

The primary data collection method employed during the study was interviews with key individuals in the district, school, and community. Field Researchers interviewed Federal program directors, coordinators of parental involvement, district and school administrators, teachers, program advisory group officers and members, parents participating in program-supported activities, parents not participating in program-supported activities, and, in some cases, officers of non-program advisory committees such as the PTA.

Observation techniques represented the second data collection strategy. The major purpose of the observations was to gather first-hand information on the parental involvement activities that took place at each site. Because of the extended site visitation schedule, Field Researchers were able to observe advisory group meetings, parents involved within classrooms, training sessions for parents, social interactions among staff and parents and, to some extent, informal interchanges involving educators and parents.

Finally, Field Researchers analyzed available documentation associated with parental involvement. At many sites, such documentation included advisory council bylaws, minutes of meetings, newsletters or bulletins, handbooks, and flyers announcing activities for parents.

Analysis Packets

As already noted, the multi-site, multi-method data collection effort was organized and structured by means of a set of analysis packets. Each packet addressed a particular research area of concern in the Study (for example, the governance function). Research areas were divided into several dimensions, and the packet was organized by these dimensions. For example, dimensions within the governance analysis packet included District-level Advisory Committees, other advisory groups/organizations, and individuals. Several dimensions were then further subdivided into sections, which focused on important topics for investigation within dimensions. Thus, within the District-level Advisory Committee dimension, sections addressed such topics as parent member characteristics, meeting logistics, and involvement in decision making. Each of these sections was introduced by an essay that explained the importance of the subject under investigation to the overall Study and described the kinds of information to be collected. We wanted the Field Researchers' data collection efforts to be based on an understanding of the relationship among various pieces of information and on a sense of how the information would add to the overall picture of parental involvement.

Three fundamental approaches to investigating topics presented within analysis packet sections were developed. They were termed constant, orienting, and exploratory. They are briefly described below.

Constant - In those limited instances where it was possible to do so, we designed research questions that were to be asked in a precise, standardized form, using the specific language in which they were written.

Orienting - For these sections, we felt that it was not possible to specify in advance the actual questions to be asked, since the nature of the questions would depend upon the particular characteristics of each site. Field Researchers were provided, within the essay lead-in, with an orientation toward the subject for investigation and guidance for initiating a line of inquiry.

Exploratory - There were some aspects of parental involvement, such as home tutoring and parent education programs, about which so little was known that we were unable to determine in advance the degree to which they merited study. To avoid prescribing any unnecessary data collection, we chose to first examine these potential avenues of parental participation at a very general level, using questions which were purely "exploratory" in nature.

Within each analysis packet section, we specified interview respondents, observation situations, and documents on the basis of the nature of information sought.

DATA REPORTING

Given the ambitious purposes of the Site Study and the consequent breadth of the analysis packets, Field Researchers collected a wealth of information about program-related parental involvement activities. The recording and transmission of this information back to SDC were crucial to the success of the Study. Consequently, we developed a multi-faceted data recording system, intended to treat each of the several types of data in as accurate, complete, and efficient a manner as possible.

For constant sections, we provided Field Researchers with forms on which to record answers to interview questions and information from observation periods. Field Researchers were requested to transcribe any notes made in the field onto these forms as soon as possible after returning from a period of interviewing or observing. Information garnered from analysis of documents could conceivably be used to complement constant interview data. Field Researchers were instructed to record such information on the same form as interview information and identify it as to its source. As each constant section was completed, Field Researchers sent a copy to their supervisors at SDC, while retaining the originals in their site notebooks.

The process for orienting sections (which constituted the bulk of the analysis packets) was considerably different. Whether generated through interview or observation, orienting information was to be recorded on an audio tape; Field Researchers were trained to recapture, in as much detail as possible, everything that transpired during the interview or observation period. For interview situations, this meant that the Field Researcher would detail the sequence of questions and replies. For observation situations, it meant that given a defined focus, the Field Researchers would recapture events in the sequence they unfolded. These tapes were called "sequential protocols." When an interview or observation could not be recorded in a sequential manner, Field Researchers were asked to recall the key points of what had transpired and prepare a tape to be transcribed into a "recollective protocol." The recording and reporting of data for exploratory sections paralleled those for orienting sections.

Document analyses, conducted as part of an orienting or exploratory section, did not require any taping on the part of a Field Researcher. Instead, the Field Researcher sent a copy either of the notes taken or the document itself (with appropriate highlighting and marginal comments) back to SDC.

The data-reporting procedures described above revolved around what were termed Site Coordinators. These were SDC staff people who had responsibility for coordinating the efforts of the Field Researchers. Site Coordinators were in charge of from four to eight sites. They contacted each Field Researcher by phone at least weekly. Each Field Researcher sent constant answer sheets and taped protocols to the Site Coordinator, who was expected to expedite transcription, mail back copies of materials to the Field Researcher, and review carefully the substance of the data. As a result, the Site Coordinator could verify that tasks were being completed satisfactorily. More importantly, Site Coordinators were expected to assist Field Researchers with the resolution of problems occuring on site and to participate in crucial decision making regarding appropriate areas for future investigation. Ultimately, the Site Coordinators became the central figures in actual analyses of the data.

ANALYSIS PROCEDURES

The following section discusses our analysis procedures for data collected during the course of the Site Study. Given the large amount of information available from each of the sites, it became especially important to establish a carefully conceived, systematic analysis plan which would achieve our primary goal of being able to identify patterns of parental involvement across sites. Throughout the Site Study, achieving cross-site comparability was foremost in our minds; this was reflected in the relatively high degree of structure we injected into our instrumentation (already discussed). And it was further reflected in the design of an analysis plan that called for a high degree of abstraction from the raw data. Analyses were done at two levels. The Field Researchers themselves conducted the first level of analysis, with guidance from the Site Coordinators. They collated the data from their interviews, observations and document analyses related to specific issues defined in the analysis packets, and prepared a "summary protocol" for each issue. These summary protocols formed a comprehensive picture of the nature, causes and consequences of parental involvement at each site.

The second level of analysis was done by the Site Coordinator at SDC, to discover patterns in the data across sites in each program. This was accomplished in two steps: first, Site Coordinators summarized the major findings from each site into syntheses that followed a common outline; second, these syntheses were further distilled into "analysis tables" that arranged the findings from all sites into large matrices that could be examined to discover cross-site patterns. Versions of these analysis tables accompany the presentations of data in this volume. The data collection methodologies we employed provided us with a great wealth of data to draw upon in preparing our reports, while the analysis strategies we adopted enabled us to discern patterns in this data and to discover major findings related to parental involvement.

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